

# Louisiana State Police

## Insurance Fraud Unit



# 2006 Annual Report



## From the Superintendent

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## Unit Supervisor's Message

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For many in Louisiana, 2006 was a year of recovery and rebuilding. For the Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit it was a year of challenges, reorganization and development. The disasters of 2005 left my Troopers and Investigators exhausted. There were many discussions as to how the Unit should proceed with disaster investigations. Each individual struggled with the reality of the situation and our responsibility to combat fraud. This struggle ultimately brought forth a maturity and greater understanding to the importance of our role in disaster recovery efforts. I personally rediscovered the value of partnerships. Without our partnerships, we could not have handled the increase in fraud referrals.



It is for this reason; I want to take the opportunity to say thank you to the Louisiana Department of Insurance – Fraud Unit, the Louisiana Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Support Unit, the Louisiana Fire Marshall's Office, Louisiana Office of Motor Vehicles, the National Insurance Crime Bureau and everyone in the SIU Community that worked with us during this trying time. Everyone should be commended for their efforts.

This year also brought forth a positive change in the direction of the Insurance Fraud Unit. Colonel Whitehorn decided to merge Insurance Fraud and Auto Theft investigations into one comprehensive investigative unit. This merger will allow the Insurance Fraud / Auto Theft Unit greater latitude in its efforts to combat insurance related crimes. As we move forward into 2007, the Unit will gain experience through training and the use of advanced technology to increase auto theft investigations, apprehensions and recoveries throughout Louisiana.

This annual report highlights our success with statistics and stories. You will be introduced to our newest members and those who have taken on supervisory roles within the Insurance Fraud Unit. As always, you will be able to compare arrests and convictions by jurisdiction. The statistics provided will help you gain insight to the successes we have achieved and the future challenges we face. One such example is the increase we are beginning to see in our conviction rate. This statistic is a result of solid investigation and prosecution efforts around the State. However, we still see bleak figures in the area of ordered restitution. The future success of combating insurance fraud in Louisiana hinges on a balance of these two statistics. As we set aside time to reflect on the lessons learned from 2006 and we plan for 2007 and beyond...remember there is no easy solution. We must continue to work together and be diligent in our mission to move Louisiana forward.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lt. Allen Carpenter".

Lt. Allen Carpenter  
Louisiana State Police  
Insurance Fraud / Auto Theft Unit



## The Year In Review

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## Louisiana's Most Notorious Criminals Of 2006

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### *Caught In The Act*

Gretna residents Howard and Claudette Clark thought they had their insurer, Liberty Mutual, fooled when they reported their three vehicles had been flooded by Hurricane Katrina. Ever so helpful, the Clarks submitted documents in support of their claim, including photographs of one of their vehicles. However, this vehicle did not look like other flooded vehicles. The mud on this vehicle appeared to have been painted on with a sponge, had an interesting water line and looked remarkably like red clay, not exactly indigenous to Gretna! Further investigation revealed all of the Clark's vehicles to be in good condition with no signs of water damage. The Clarks were arrested and charged with Insurance Fraud.



### *Fake "Hit & Run"*

In February of 2006, Jessica Norris filed a claim with her insurance company alleging damage to her vehicle as the result of a vehicular collision. The claim was paid and her insurance company took title to the vehicle. Three months later, Norris obtained insurance through another company for this same vehicle, which she no longer owned, and shortly after made a claim alleging damage to the vehicle as the result of a "hit and run" crash. State Police investigators determined that the damage reported for the February crash was the same damage reported for the May crash and that the crash reported by Norris in May did not occur. State Police Investigators concluded that Norris attempted to be paid for two insurance claims reporting the same damage on both claims. Norris was booked into the Rapides Parish Jail.



### *Glass Repairman Arrested Twice In One Year*

For the second time in less than a year, the Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit arrested Adam Chauvin, a Baton Rouge automobile glass repairman, on felony insurance fraud, forgery and theft warrants.

Troopers believe Chauvin, owner of Chauvin's Auto Glass, intentionally defrauded Farm Bureau and Lynx Services, a third party billing vendor, of payments in excess of \$7,600.00 by billing the two companies for services and materials he never provided. Chauvin was previously arrested by the LSP IFU in December 2005 for the same fraudulent billing practices. After his first arrest, Chauvin entered into a plea agreement with the 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court of East Baton Rouge Parish. Nevertheless, Chauvin continued in his criminal activity leading to his second arrest on Wednesday, September 13, 2006. Chauvin was charged with eight felony counts each of Insurance Fraud, Forgery and Theft.

### *Man Schemes To Receive Money From Insurance Company*

On August 31, 2005 Washington filed three claims with the Allstate Insurance Company alleging his 2003 Hummer H2, 2003 Ford Crown Victoria, and 2005 BMW 745i were damaged due to the flooding caused by Hurricane Katrina. He stated the vehicles were parked at his residence when he evacuated New Orleans. Allstate processed the claim based on his statements and the fact the area his residence was located in was devastated by flooding. He was paid \$130,339.73 for the payoff of the three vehicles. Allstate was unable to locate and recover the vehicles and Washington denied knowing the location of the vehicles. He claimed local authorities towed the vehicles from his residence.

Through a tip the Insurance Fraud Unit learned the BMW was being serviced at a local dealership when the hurricane struck. Furthermore, the dealership was in an area which had not flooded. An investigation ensued and it was discovered that some time after the storm Washington picked up the vehicle from the dealership and since then had brought the vehicle back to the dealership for routine service. It was also revealed Washington recently received several traffic citations while driving the BMW and the vehicle had been impounded as a result of the citations. The vehicle was recovered by Allstate and an inspection did not reveal any indications the vehicle had sustained flood damage.

With the coordination of Allstate's SIU, the Insurance Fraud Unit learned the claims on the Hummer and Ford were also fraudulent. In the months preceding Hurricane Katrina the vehicles had been used as collateral to secure loans from a local pawn shop. The vehicles were in possession of the pawn shop when the hurricane struck and were in areas which had not flooded. Inspections of the vehicles confirmed they had not flooded. Furthermore, it was discovered that prior to the storm the pawn shop began the process of taking ownership of the vehicles because Washington defaulted on the loans.

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## Fraud Referrals

2006	
<b>Non-Hurricane Related Referrals:</b>	
Auto Claims Fraud	121
Disability Fraud	7
Disaster Fraud	3
Fraudulent/Invalid Auto Insurance Card	24
Glass Repair Fraud	1
Healthcare Fraud	8
Life Insurance Fraud	9
Property & Casualty Fraud	46
Producer Fraud	20
Staged Crash Fraud	18
Worker's Compensation Fraud/Premium Fraud	18
Other	55
<b>Total Non-Hurricane Related Referrals</b>	<b>330</b>
<b>Hurricane Related Referrals:</b>	
Auto Claims Fraud	43
Producer Fraud	21
Property & Casualty Fraud	94
Other	11
<b>Total Hurricane Related Referrals</b>	<b>169</b>
<b>Total IFU Referrals:</b>	<b>499</b>

## Misc...

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### Auto Theft Unit Has Merged With The Insurance Fraud Unit

As of September 5, 2006 the Vehicle Theft Unit has merged with the Insurance Fraud Unit. The Vehicle Theft Unit was established in October 1997 and began to focus its investigative efforts on vehicle theft related crimes. Through aggressive investigative efforts, specialized training, and with the aid of mobile data terminals (MDT's) installed in unmarked units they have been responsible for recovering over 7 million dollars in stolen vehicles and heavy equipment. Personnel within both Units are excited about the merger and look forward to working as one team to fight Insurance Fraud and Vehicle Theft.



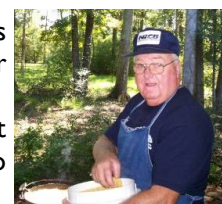
### High Tech Gadget Helps Troopers Identify Stolen Vehicles

The Louisiana State Police (LSP) Insurance Fraud and Auto Theft Unit has a new high tech tool in its arsenal and it's looking for car thieves. LSP's mobile License Plate Reader (LPR) will soon begin scanning cars in search of stolen vehicles and license plates. Troopers typically enter license plate numbers into their computers manually and wait for the results to return – the LPR will do the job automatically.

The LPR consists of a camera placed on the roof of a patrol car and a computer that goes inside the car. When the device finds a stolen license plate or stolen car, the system's computer screen will flash a picture of the plate and an alarm will alert the Trooper.

The National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) and LSP have teamed up once again in the fight against insurance fraud and vehicle theft. NICB purchased the LPR from Remington Elsas Law Enforcement Systems which is a joint venture between the popular Remington Arms Company based in Madison, North Carolina. LSP will use the LPR in areas with large volumes of cars, such as malls, parking lots, and even the interstates. According to Remington Elsas, the device can scan 8,000 to 10,000 in one shift and can read plates across four lanes of traffic.

**NICB Appreciation Fish Fry** Over the past year since the Gulf Coast Task Force was created, it's been all work and no play until September 27, 2006 when NICB hosted their Appreciation Fish Fry. State Agencies, Insurance Company's SIU, Motor Vehicles, NICB and anyone who is in the fight against fraud were invited. It was a great time to visit and meet people that you normally just talk to over the phone. Thank you NICB Gulf Coast Task Force for a wonderful time!!!!



### Aerial Photography Used in Fighting Fraud

Aerial Photography is being used in the fight against fraud. Following Hurricane Katrina in August of 2005, various agencies used airplanes to relay high-resolution images of flooded areas. Most of the images were taken around the first part of September when the flood waters were still high and residents were not allowed in the city. Many people viewed the images to see the damage that was done by Hurricane Katrina. The images that were taken are extremely accurate and have the ability to zoom into neighborhoods to identify patches of rooftop as small as 2 square feet. Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit is able to obtain photographs from days after the storm and compare these images to the damage that is being claimed. Hard copies of the images are available and can be used as evidence in fraud cases.

In January of 2006, the Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit made its first arrest using the technology of aerial photography. The Insurance Fraud Unit plans to use aerial photography in their investigation of cases in the future.





## Partnerships

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## Office Spotlight

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### Alexandria/Lafayette Field Office

*Sgt. David Stelly*

Insurance Fraud and Auto Theft complaints initiated in the Central and Southwest areas of Louisiana are handled by a combined effort between the Alexandria and Lafayette field offices of the Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit. The offices are supervised by Sgt. David Stelly. Tfc. Jerry Johnson, Tfc. Belinda Murphy, and Inv. Darrell Guillory are assigned to the Alexandria Field Office, and S/T Wayne Vidrine and S/T Wayne Montet man the Lafayette Field Office. The offices respond to complaints in their respective areas, as well as, share response to complaints which were generated from the Hurricane Rita ravaged portions of Cameron and Calcasieu Parishes located in the southwest corner of Louisiana.

The beginning of 2006 brought about new investigative challenges for the Alexandria and Lafayette Field Offices. Initially, the field offices saw a huge influx of complaints dealing with alleged fraudulent claims made against insurance companies and FEMA as a result of the devastating impact of Hurricane Rita to the Southwest corner of Louisiana. The complaints made were of predominantly of producer fraud, false certificates of workmen's compensation coverage in particular with residential construction contractors, and exaggerated losses. Towards the end of 2006, the field offices experienced an increase in producer fraud complaints, mostly involving, agents or employees failing to remit payments. The Alexandria and Lafayette field offices consider these complaints a priority, based on the detrimental impact they have on an individual's coverage, or lack thereof, and an individual's faith in the insurance industry as a whole.

As the end of 2006 draws near, the Alexandria and Lafayette field offices have already begun to look towards 2007. The enforcement goal for the field offices is to increase the overall productivity and effectiveness of our criminal investigations. Our non-enforcement goals for 2007 are to increase our expertise and proficiency in auto theft investigations through training opportunities, continue to educate and inform patrol officers on how to identify potential fraud when investigating a crash, and strengthen our working relationship with Insurance Industry SIUs (Special Investigative Units).

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### Baton Rouge Field Office

*Sgt. Stacey Pearson*

The Baton Rouge Field Office is located within Louisiana State Police Headquarters and serves a nine parish area – Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St. James, West Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana. Between its Sergeant and three Troopers, the Baton Rouge Field Office possesses a vast amount of educational experience. That education, coupled with nearly 20 years of insurance fraud investigative experience, allows the Baton Rouge Field Office to successfully investigate and bring to prosecution a wide variety of cases including offshore running, disaster fraud, staged crashes, producer fraud, workers compensation fraud, and more recently, vehicle theft. The Baton Rouge Field Office arrested 42 individuals in 2006.

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### Monroe Field Office

*Sgt. Keith Phenix*

The Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit located in Monroe is comprised of Sergeant Keith Phenix, Senior Trooper Debbie Gibson, and Trooper First Class Sanikka Williams. Gibson is wearing a dual hat as insurance/auto theft investigator and Williams was recently assigned in October 2006. We are primarily responsible for investigating referrals of fraudulent insurance acts and auto theft related crimes in Northeast Louisiana. However, we may be called upon to investigate criminal activities throughout the state. Lately, we have seen an increase in agents/employees of insurance companies defrauding consumers in our area. There has also been a significant increase in the number of referrals. Insurance Fraud is a crime that occur everyday in which honest consumers and businesses are paying the price. Help us protect your money by reporting fraudulent claims or suspected fraud.

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## Office Spotlight *continued...*

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### New Orleans Field Office

*Sgt. Rickie Guhman*

The Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit located in Kenner is comprised of Sergeant Rickie Guhman, Senior Trooper Robert Bennett, Senior Trooper Joe Cuccia, Senior Trooper Todd Marchand, Trooper First Class Will Pike, and Senior Trooper Barry Ward. The office is primarily responsible for investigations in parishes surrounding the New Orleans Metro Area as well as the areas surrounding Houma, Thibodaux, and Slidell. Over the past year the majority of our investigations have focused on fraudulent insurance acts related to Hurricane Katrina. For the upcoming year we expect to continue working investigations related to Hurricane Katrina as well as a renewed focus on auto theft related crimes and fraudulent insurance acts unrelated to Hurricane Katrina.

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### Shreveport Field Office

*Sgt. Gary Bridges*

Like other Insurance Fraud field offices, the Shreveport office began 2006 on the heels of indexing the thousands of flood cars in the parishes devastated by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The New Year began with picking up the ongoing investigations put on hold with Katrina's arrival in 2005.

During 2006, the office received 70 referrals from private insurers and citizen's complaints. Of the complaints received, most consisted of exaggerated auto claims, property and casualty claims, staged and/or caused crashes, and producer/agent fraud. While referrals for auto claims, property and casualty claims, and staged and/or caused crashes maintained a steady flow from one year to the next, 2006 saw a slight increase in producer/agent fraud. By year's end, office personnel had arrested 38 persons suspected of committing various criminal acts associated with insurance fraud.

In August, M/T Ted Raley concluded a nearly two year long investigation of a staged crash ring with seventeen federal indictments of persons involved in staged and/or caused crashes in the Ringgold, Louisiana area. By the end of year, all but four pled guilty to the charges in US District Court.

As 2006 transitioned into 2007, the Shreveport office continued to press forward with in-depth, quality investigations of those suspected of committing insurance fraud.

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## Personnel Changes

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### **Michele Aucoin**

*Intelligence Analyst*

In April of 2006 Michele Aucoin transferred to the Insurance Fraud Unit from Investigative Support Section (ISS) within Louisiana State Police. She began her career with Department of Public Safety when she was employed by the Office of Motor Vehicles in 1998 after attending Louisiana Southeastern University. She then transferred to Louisiana State Police in 2002 when she was employed by ISS as an Intelligence Analyst. In 2004 she became interested in the fight against insurance fraud and began concentrating on providing analytical support to the Insurance Fraud Unit while maintaining her other duties with ISS. With Michele transferring to Insurance Fraud this year she now can devote 100% of her time to provide analytical support to the Insurance Fraud Unit. Michele is married to Marc Aucoin and they have two adorable boys, Parker and Jackson.

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### **Shannon Blacklock**

*Administrative Coordinator*

In July of 2006 Shannon Blacklock transferred to the Insurance Fraud Unit. Shannon has been with Louisiana State Police since May of 2004 when she was employed by the Transportation and Environmental Safety Section (TESS) Motor Carrier Safety Unit. Shannon is married to Martin Blacklock Jr. and has a step son Christopher. Shannon loves spending time with her family and has a passion for horses.

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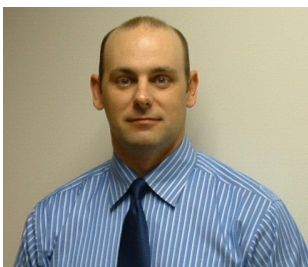


### **Gerry Coleman**

*Trooper*

Trooper First Class Gerry Coleman is the newest member of the Baton Rouge field office. He has been with the Louisiana State Police since 2000 and was previously assigned to Troop G and Internal Affairs. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Southern University and, upon his graduation, TFC Coleman was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps. Upon his honorable discharge in 1989, he returned to school and obtained a law degree from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University. TFC Coleman is active in the Louisiana State Troopers Association and enjoys fishing.

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### **Joe Cuccia**

*Trooper*

Trooper Joseph "Joe" Cuccia is one of the newest members to the Insurance Fraud Unit. He was hired by the Louisiana State Police in 1994 after serving as an officer for three years with the New Orleans Police Department. He worked at Troop B and in Narcotics before transferring to the Vehicle Theft Unit in 1997. For the past nine years he has been involved in vehicle theft investigations and has attained a high degree of knowledge in this area. Even though the Vehicle Theft Unit was merged into the Insurance Fraud Unit his primary focus will still be vehicle theft related investigations.



## Personnel Changes *continued...*

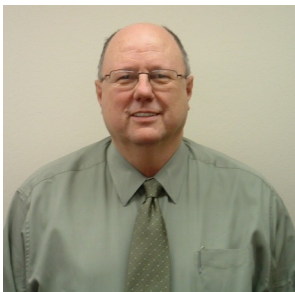
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**Rickie Guhman**

*Sergeant*

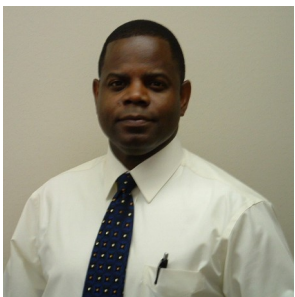
Sergeant Rickie Guhman was hired by the Louisiana State Police in 1997 was assigned to Troop A in Baton Rouge. He worked in Uniform Patrol until August 2001 when he transferred to the Insurance Fraud Unit and worked in the Baton Rouge office. On February 13, 2006 he was promoted to Sergeant and took over as supervisor of the Kenner office. He is a graduate of Louisiana State University and served six years in the Army National Guard.



**Darrell Guillory**

*Investigator*

Investigator Darrell Guillory received a B.S. Degree in Education from Louisiana Tech University. After graduation, he was drafted in the United States Army. Upon completion of his Army duty, Inv. Guillory applied to the Louisiana State Police and was accepted for the May 1975 class. Inv. Guillory served at Troop E as a Trooper and Sergeant, in the State Police Gaming Unit as a Sergeant, and in State Police Detectives as a Lieutenant, before retiring in October of 2001. After retirement, Inv. Guillory, taught History at Peabody Magnet High School. His teaching career was cut short when, in 2006, he was re-hired by State Police as an investigator and assigned to the Insurance Fraud Unit.



**Jerry Johnson**

*Trooper First Class*

TFC Jerry J. Johnson graduated from High School in Alexandria and joined the U.S. Army. After a notable career in the military, Tfc. Johnson joined the ranks of Louisiana State Police in September of 2000. While assigned to Troop E as a patrolman, Tfc. Johnson served on the SWAT Team, Mobile Field Force, as a LSP Training Academy Duty Officer, and as a LSP sponsored mentor. Even though, Tfc. Johnson has left uniformed patrol, he is still an active member of the SWAT Team and participates in monthly training. He is married with three sons and a graduate of Upper Iowa University.



**Stacey Pearson**

*Sergeant*

Trooper First Class Stacey Pearson was promoted to Sergeant of the Baton Rouge Field Office in February 2006. She transferred to the Insurance Fraud Unit in 2001 after previous assignments at Troop I and West District Narcotics, both in her hometown of Lafayette. Sgt. Pearson holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from the University of Louisiana-Lafayette. She is active in her local community and is a member of the LSP Critical Incident Stress Management Team. Sgt. Pearson is a single mother of one son, Hal, who is 16. She enjoys painting, photography and writing.

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## Personnel Changes *continued...*

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### **Keith Phenix**

*Sergeant*

Senior Trooper Keith Phenix was promoted to Sergeant on February 13, 2006 in the Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit located in Monroe, Louisiana. He has worked in the Insurance Fraud Unit since February 2004 and was previously assigned to Troop F in patrol from March 1992 to February 2004. He has two adorable children, Gabrielle, who is 16, and

Keith II, who is 12. He is also a Command Sergeant Major in the United States Army Reserve with over 27 years of service. He was recently elected as the First Vice President of the Central States Troopers Coalition of Louisiana for 2007 -2009.

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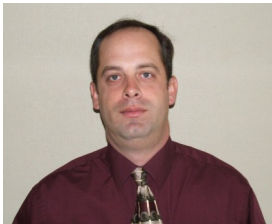
### **David Stelly**

*Sergeant*

Sgt. David Stelly has supervised the Alexandria and Lafayette field offices since June of 2006, when he was promoted from Trooper First Class to Sergeant. Sgt. Stelly graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Finance from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Sgt. Stelly was hired by Louisiana State Police in January of 1998. After a brief assignment as a patrolman at Troop I, Sgt. Stelly worked in the State Police Narcotics Section for approximately six years

before being promoted into Insurance Fraud.

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### **Wayne Vidrine**

*Senior Trooper*

Senior Trooper Wayne Vidrine is a 12 year veteran of Louisiana State Police. Prior to his transfer to the Insurance Fraud Unit, S/T Vidrine worked at Troop I, where his duties included uniformed patrol, accident reconstruction, and field training officer. He is certified in Accident Reconstruction and has been tenured as an expert witness in state court. Wayne also has experience in criminal investigations, having been assigned to the Louisiana State Police Gaming Enforcement Section.

Wayne's achievements have been recognized by Louisiana State Police through the awarding of the following: Medal of Valor, Meritorious Service Award, and Unit Citation. Wayne is married with three children.

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### **Sanikka Williams**

*Trooper First Class*

TFC Sanikka Williams has been employed with Louisiana State Police since October 27, 2001. TFC Williams worked in uniform patrol in the Troop F area approximately 5 years before transferring to BOI/Insurance Fraud Unit in the Fall of 2006. TFC Williams received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice from ULM-Monroe in 1998. Prior to becoming a Trooper, she worked for the Department of Corrections as a Juvenile Correctional Officer.

TFC Williams and her husband Roy have a two year old son, Jabrell Williams.

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## Awards

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### Trooper Belinda Murphy



Col. Henry Whitethorn presenting award to Trooper Murphy

Trooper Murphy received information related to the illicit distribution of prescription medication, and the possible molestation of an eight year old child. Handicapped by limited information and the lack of an active informant, the investigation was not developing quickly using traditional techniques. Concerned for the safety of the child caused her to redirect the focus of the investigation, and become creative. As a result of her uncompromising determination, the child was removed from a dangerous environment and the neighbor was arrested for aggravated rape, sexual battery, and several counts of obtaining controlled dangerous substances by fraud and deceit.

### Sgt. Stacey Pearson



Col. Henry Whitethorn presenting award to Sgt. Pearson

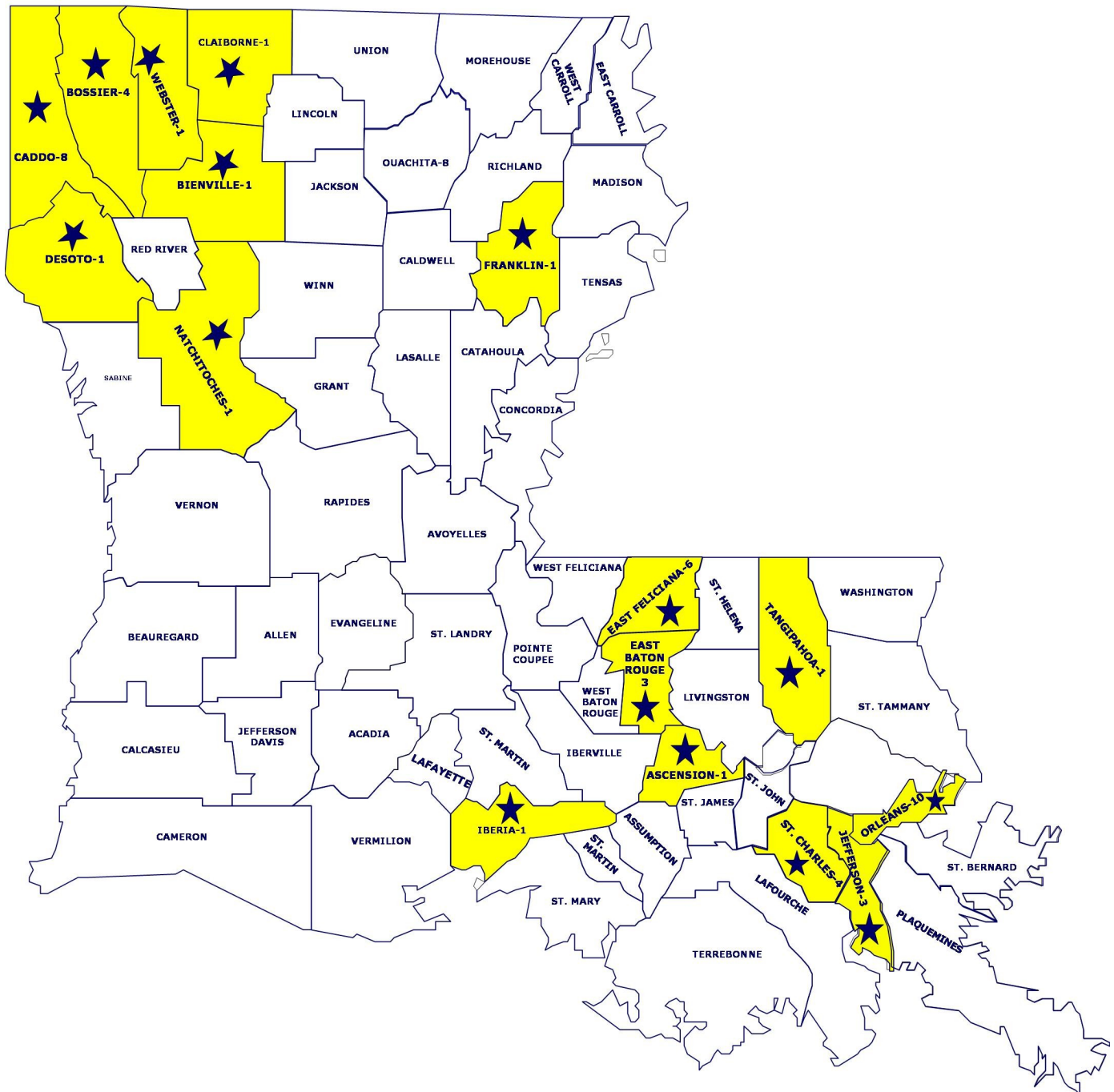
In the last year, Sergeant Pearson has initiated ten criminal investigations which have resulted in the arrest of twenty-three persons. A majority of her arrests have come from investigations of organized criminal activity.

In August 2004, two subjects were arrested on conspiracy to commit arson with intent to defraud and insurance fraud. After receiving a complaint from the Deputy State Fire Marshal's Office, Sergeant Pearson's investigation revealed that two subjects conspired to set fire to their mobile home. The subjects submitted a fire loss claim totaling more than \$26,000.

Between December 6th and 14th, 2005, Sergeant Pearson was instrumental in the arrests of six individuals for Insurance Fraud. These arrests and three previous arrests were the conclusion of an investigation which started with the recovery of a stolen vehicle.

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## 2006 Insurance Fraud Convictions By Parish



**47 Total Convictions**



## Judicial Actions

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<b>2006</b>	
<b>Convictions</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Pre-Trial Intervention</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Community Service</b>	<b>400 Hours</b>
<b>Probation</b>	<b>42 Years</b>
<b>Fines</b>	<b>\$10,363.00</b>
<b>Restitution</b>	<b>\$49,807.42</b>
<b>Jail Time</b>	<b>46 Years, 10 Months &amp; 13 Days</b>

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## IFU Budget For Fiscal Year 2006

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## IFU In The News

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### Las Vegas men held in hurricane fraud

*The Advocate...January 7, 2006*

*By...Mark F. Bonner*

Two Las Vegas men accused of conspiring to defraud insurance companies and Hurricane Katrina victims of tens of thousands of dollars were extradited to Louisiana on Friday, State Police reported.

William Pinckard, 49, and James R. Rousseau, 40, were booked into St. Tammany Parish Jail on multiple counts of insurance fraud, conspiracy, burglary, criminal damage to property and theft, a State Police news release said.

Before the storm, Rousseau worked for the Las Vegas-based water removal service Aqua Man, which was owned by Pinckard, the release said.

In an agreement with Pinckard, Rousseau left Aqua Man days before Hurricane Katrina pummeled the Gulf Coast for employment with an out-of-state private adjusting firm contracted by State Farm Insurance, the release said.

He later was assigned to work claims in the Slidell and St. Tammany Parish area, the release said.

Lt. Allen Carpenter, supervisor of the State Police Insurance Fraud Unit, said State Police and the National Insurance Crime Bureau were made aware of the men's business practices by State Farm Insurance after the company conducted its own investigation.

**"Their intention was to come here and take advantage of Louisiana citizens in the aftermath of Katrina,"  
...Lt. Allen Carpenter**

Investigators examined complaints from eight State Farm policyholders in that area regarding the quality of work and the billing practices of Aqua Man, Rousseau and Pinckard, Carpenter said.

The release says Rousseau contacted State Farm policyholders during the claim process to recommend Aqua Man as the company to rid their homes of mold contamination.

Residents hesitant about using Aqua Man allegedly were threatened with litigation for delaying the cleanup process, thereby increasing the loss to the insurance company, the release said.

Once the homeowner authorized the work, the release says, Pinckard would arrive at the residence in minutes.

Rousseau then would issue the policyholder a check for \$5,000 to begin work before instructing them to write a check to Pinckard from their personal account for the same amount of money, the release said.

Pinckard requested the residents make their checks payable to him and not his business, claiming he did not have a bank account in the area, the release said.

In reality, Carpenter said, Aqua Man had no business license or permit to operate in Louisiana.

During the course of the investigation, the Insurance Fraud Unit learned Pinckard hired work crews to begin cleanup, but they either did poor work or left without completing the task, the release says.

Pinckard then would submit a bill to the policyholder for amounts ranging from \$13,000 to \$16,000 for work normally worth \$3,000 to \$6,000, the release said.

Witnesses told investigators that when they contested the bill, Pinckard made physical taunts and threatened to turn them over to collection agencies and ruin their credit, the release said.

"They had the technical ability to (perform their jobs), but their conspiracy was that every claim they would look at, if there was a need for water restoration, they would push that homeowner to Aqua Man.

"There is no law that says you cannot make a referral, but it is unethical, especially if you are getting a cut from it," he said.

In Las Vegas, Carpenter said, the men appear to be legitimate businessmen.

"Their intention was to come here and take advantage of Louisiana citizens in the aftermath of Katrina," Carpenter said. "More than anything else, they undermined the trust of the recovery effort. People are waiting to get their lives together and they took advantage of that for their own profit."

## IFU In The News

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### N.O. Man Booked In Roof Scam

*Times-Picayune (New Orleans)...January 19, 2006*  
By...staff reports

A New Orleans homeowner was arrested Tuesday, accused of damaging his roof, then blaming it on Hurricanes Katrina and Rita to defraud his insurance company.

Michael Bourg was booked by State Police with one count of felony insurance fraud. State Police investigators with the Insurance Fraud Unit took the case after receiving a complaint from Bourg's private insurance carrier.

**The investigators determined that damage to the shingles and felt paper on Bourg's roof were the result of "human intervention," not the storms"**  
**...Lt. Allen Carpenter.**

The investigators determined that damage to the shingles and felt paper on Bourg's roof were the result of "human intervention," not the storms, according to a statement issued Wednesday by State Police spokesman Lt. Allen Carpenter.

After being notified that a warrant was issued for his arrest, Bourg surrendered Tuesday and was booked at Orleans Parish Prison.

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### Baton Rouge Woman Pleads Guilty In Insurance Fraud Scam

*US States News, January 30, 2006*

The Louisiana attorney general issued the following news release:

Attorney General Charles C. Foti, Jr. announced today that Marsha Lavernia Scott, aka Marsha L. Dillon, 3120 Lambert Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, pled guilty on January 23, 2006 to one count of filing false public records in connection with an insurance fraud scam.

Scott is a licensed insurance agent who purchased phony continuing education credits from Leo Vincent Jacob and then submitted the phony credits with her insurance license renewal application to the Louisiana Department of Insurance. Continuing education certificates are required to be attached to all renewal

applications filed with the Louisiana Department of Insurance, or a renewal cannot be granted. Leo Jacob pled guilty in April 2005 to six counts of filing false public records in a criminal scheme that involved hundreds of insurance agents across Louisiana. Jacob, a licensed agent and continuing education instructor, conducted the scheme in which numerous insurance agents received certificates of continuing education credit in exchange for cash, when in fact no such courses had been attended or taught.

Scott was placed on two years active supervised probation, and ordered to pay a fine, court costs and perform community service.

The Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Support Unit is part of the Louisiana Insurance Fraud Task Force that also includes the Louisiana State Police and the Louisiana Department of Insurance.

Scott's probation will be reviewed on April 26, 2006 in the 19th Judicial District Court in Baton Rouge.

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### Man Charged With Fraud

*Daily Advertiser (Lafayette, La.)...March 18, 2006*  
by...Amanda McElfresh

A former Lafayette insurance agent has been arrested on charges of felony insurance fraud after a lengthy investigation by Louisiana State Police and the Louisiana Department of Insurance.

Thomas Carlyle Mahoney, 56, was arrested in Florida on Friday by Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit agents. According to state police, from 2000 to 2003, Mahoney sold bogus liability and accidental death policies to owners and pilots of ultralight airplanes and kept the premiums for himself.

According to a June 26, 2003, Daily Advertiser article, the alleged scheme came to light after the widow of a man who died in an ultralight crash in Florida tried to collect on a \$50,000 accidental death policy her husband had taken out through Mahoney.

Authorities now say Mahoney pocketed the money from the man's premium, as well as the \$50,000 his beneficiaries were entitled to. The exact number of fraudulent policies Mahoney sold over the years remains unknown.

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State police said Mahoney sold the ultralight policies through Louisiana Insurance Consultants, a legitimate company, although he later changed the name to Mahoney Insurance Agency and operated the company out of an office on Polk Street. Louisiana Insurance Consultants was the underwriter for an alleged Costa Rica-based company called Corporacion El Antifaz, S.A. The policies that Mahoney offered through Corporacion El Antifaz were bogus, as was the company itself.

At one time, Mahoney did have a valid property and casualty insurance license, which was suspended in June 2003. Authorities said that license did not authorize Mahoney to sell liability and accidental death policies for aircraft.

Mahoney was arrested by the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office in Clearwater, Fla. He then was transported back to Louisiana, where he was booked into the Lafayette Parish Correctional Center on one count of felony theft and one count of unfair trade practices.

State police said the case will be turned over to the Lafayette Parish District Attorney for criminal prosecution.

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### BR Alarm Company Operator Arrested On Fraud Charges

*The Advocate (Baton Rouge, La.)...March 18, 2006*  
By...Advocate Staff Writer

A Baton Rouge man who operated a fire and burglar-alarm company was arrested this week on accusations he provided falsified insurance documents to the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

Subject was arrested Thursday by the Louisiana State Police's Insurance Fraud Unit on 38 counts of worker's compensation fraud, seven counts of insurance fraud and seven counts of willful misrepresentation, a State Police news release says.

Subject was active in the industry under a number of corporate identities, including ASP and Advanced Security Protection, the release says.

A three-month joint investigation by the two state agencies showed subject tried to conceal that he intentionally failed to provide worker's compensation coverage for at least 38 employees over a four-year period, the release says.

Subject also misrepresented the fact that he did not have liability insurance coverage for his business as required by state Fire Marshal regulations, the release says.

Subject also misrepresented the fact that he did not have liability insurance coverage for his business as required by state Fire Marshal regulations, the release says.

Three weeks before his arrest, subject was issued a cease-and-desist order for operating without a valid license to install or service electronic security alarm systems, the release says.

State Police said his arrest will not disrupt ongoing monitoring service to ASP or Advanced Security customers.

The case is being forwarded to the East Baton Rouge Parish District Attorney's Office for criminal prosecution, the release says.

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### Eye In The Sky Breaks Case; N.O. Couple Booked In Insurance Probe

*Times-Picayune (New Orleans, La.)...March 18, 2006*  
By...Trymaine Lee, Staff Writer

An eastern New Orleans couple who authorities said smashed the roof of their home then claimed it had been wrecked by Hurricane Katrina was arrested Thursday on insurance fraud charges, in the first public case in which investigators used satellite images to try to prove the damage was caused well after the storm, State Police said.

Russell and Elaine Lane of the 7000 block of Fieldston Road were arrested and each charged with one count of insurance fraud, a felony offense, police said. They were released on bond of \$5,000 each and could not be reached for comment.

State Police investigators said the Lanes damaged their roof well after the Aug. 29 storm to try to cash in on the mold endorsement on their homeowner's policy. But when inspectors from their insurance company went out to the property to assess the damage, police said they found damage inconsistent with what they've seen elsewhere as a result of the hurricane.

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"The damage appeared to be man-made," said Lt. Allen Carpenter, supervisor of the State Police's anti-fraud unit.

The insurance company forwarded the case to Carpenter's unit.

***"I see no damage two weeks after the storm, but see damage three weeks later and I know there was no significant wind event (in the interim), ....Lt. Allen Carpenter***

Soon after, Carpenter's squad stumbled upon a tool widely used in the aftermath of the storm by residents, disaster relief organizations and federal agencies: satellite imagery. The images showed that right after the storm there was little to no damage to the Lanes' home.

"I see no damage two weeks after the storm, but see damage three weeks later and I know there was no significant wind event (in the interim)," Carpenter said.

Carpenter said the Lane case was the first case in which State Police used satellite technology to build a fraud case. Immediately after the storm, various agencies used satellites to relay high-resolution images of flooded New Orleans. Most of the images were taken Sept. 1-5, when floodwater still remained in most neighborhoods, and long before residents were allowed back.

"The satellite images are a valuable tool for us to use to identify damage alleged to have taken place at a particular time," Carpenter said. "It gives us a good idea of what properties were like and what they looked like after the storm and before residents were allowed to come back in."

Anybody can view post-storm satellite images on various Web sites for free, but he said his unit must purchase hard copies to be used as evidence in fraud cases. Carpenter said his unit will now review each post-Katrina case of suspected fraud to see if the benefit of buying the high-resolution images is worth the cost. The images used for such cases are extremely accurate, able to zoom into neighborhoods and identify patches of rooftop as small as 2 square feet. The resolution allows investigators to differentiate between sections with or without shingles, as well as identify roofs with exposed wooden frames. They can also discern, block by block, the level of flooding.

"When looking at satellite imagery, we can look at the

whole block and you can see homes that have damage to the roof with felt torn off. You can see exposed wood, and when you pan from house to house any kind of exposure is very clear," Carpenter said.

Carpenter also said his unit plans to use the technology in cases of suspected auto insurance fraud, where people might claim that their car was under floodwater when in fact their neighborhood never flooded.

He said the images are also helpful in cases in which it's a challenge to differentiate between wind and flood

damage, or where homeowners and the insurance company dispute the severity and causes of damage. "This allows me to look at the evidence independently. I don't have to take the word of the insurance company or the insured," Carpenter said.

It's also a helpful tool considering the large amount of cases his unit will likely handle because of Katrina's massive destruction.

"This is the first time as a nation we have had any disaster this size," Carpenter said. "In my case it's the largest fraud event the nation has ever seen after a natural disaster. So we are going to use every resource available to work our fraud cases."

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### City Spurned Offer Of Cash For Cars; Abandoned Vehicles Can Be Hauled Away

*Times-Picayune (New Orleans, La.)....March 19, 2006  
by....James Varney, Staff Writer*

Katrina turned New Orleans into an auto junkyard and the flooded cars are still everywhere, mementos of the storm and of the city's continuing failure to clean itself up.

Almost seven months after Hurricane Katrina, the Nagin administration still dickers over details of a contract that would gradually rid the cityscape of these vehicular eyesores -- at a cost of \$23 million over another six months.

Which makes it of more than passing interest to discover that the largest car crusher east of the Rockies, K&L Auto Crushers of Tyler, Texas, offered in October to do the job in 15 weeks and actually pay the city

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for the privilege of hauling the junk away. How much? How about \$100 per flooded car. With an estimated 50,000 vehicles on the street at that time, the city would have netted \$5 million, rather than shelling out four times that sum, as it plans to do now.

K&L's Dan Simpson said he first made his pitch five weeks after Katrina, on a piece of paper that he slipped to Mayor Ray Nagin at one of his boisterous post-flood town hall meetings. Simpson said he'd bring in between five and 10 mobile crushers. Working them six days a week at scattered sites around the city, K&L offered to crumple and haul the vehicles and handle the "remediation," or environmental disposal of gasoline, oil and other hazardous wastes and do all the paperwork.

The city held back, apparently concerned it didn't have the legal right to remove the abandoned cars, he said.

### Law allows for removal

But the law is on the city's side, according to lawyer and Tulane Law professor Vernon Palmer. Palmer cites city ordinance 66-101, a measure enacted during the Moon Landrieu administration to cope with a glut of abandoned cars that had accumulated over several years.

"They were talking about 2,000 or 3,000 cars, and that was considered a crisis," he noted dryly.

The ordinance is still on the books, and it states that "junked, abandoned, and wrecked vehicles," can be crushed and dismantled and sold for scrap 15 days after a certified letter is sent to its last known owner, Palmer said. History shows the law, which essentially turns the junkers into potential cash and leaves the solution to market forces, worked.

"It's not a very complicated way to deal with this," Palmer said. "Once operators knew they could get the scrap value of the cars, that quickly got the job done and they disappeared pretty fast. It seems to me that if you had a contractor operating within the guidelines of the ordinance it could be done."

"You could clear this all up right away if the mayor or the governor would simply issue an executive order saying get rid of them," Simpson said. "The small independent tow guys know where the cars are and they'd go out and get them."

Environmental permits would have to be obtained and the skein of paperwork attached to cars could take time to unwind, but those considerations apply just as forcibly, whether the city is collecting money for the scrap metal or paying millions to have someone haul it away. "We'd clean up after ourselves and move on," Simpson said. "They could have someone from the Environmental Protection Agency sitting right there watching the whole operation if they wanted."

K&L isn't the only outfit offering the service. "We've had lots of crushers call up and say, 'Hey, we want to take care of your problem,' and I say, 'Well, I appreciate that,'" said Lt. Alan Carpenter, who heads the State Police's auto insurance fraud division.

Crushing still an option Simpson said the outline of the K&L proposal still stands, although adjustments would be in order, in part because the price of scrap metal has fallen from about \$160 to \$120 per ton. Meanwhile, the number of junkers on city streets also has fallen, to somewhere between 25,000 and 30,000, as insurance companies remove cars they've totaled out. In addition, K&L would no longer use portable crushers, Simpson said, but would require that the cars be brought to specific staging areas, as is contemplated in the contract still being negotiated by the city.

Nonetheless, the bottom line still looks like a million dollar profit compared to a \$23 million payout.

The elapsed time since the storm may also work in the crush-plan's favor. Most of the cars left in the city are most likely uninsured or only carried liability policies. That presumably makes them less valuable and their owners less likely to oppose destruction of the vehicles. "What the hell have people been doing for six months?" Simpson asked. "There are people who take an interest in their property and they have taken care of this already. If you've abandoned your car and left it sitting there for six months, why would you suddenly want it tomorrow? Because somebody else did all your work for you?"

### Executive order needed

One way the work could be done would be through executive orders, issued either by Nagin or Gov. Kathleen Blanco. Simpson said he asked Blanco's staff to make such a move soon after Katrina, and Carpenter said the State Police urged Nagin to do the same. But in the first months after Katrina, when politicians were taking heat for government's response and issues of private property

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and possessions were badly tangled, no one was willing to cut through the red tape.

Nagin's press office, most of whom had traveled with him to Atlanta this weekend, did not respond to an e-mail asking about Simpson and his plan.

Denise Bottcher, Blanco's spokeswoman, said she was unaware of any earlier discussions between Simpson and the governor's staff.

While various players in the scrap metal industry have expressed interest in Louisiana's post-Katrina possibilities, Bottcher said she has not been privy to any recent discussions about transforming flood-ruined cars into moneymakers.

"Everybody was really sensitive at the time," Carpenter recalled. "But now it seems a little long-winded to me. These contracts need to be issued and these cars have to be removed, and if people just moved forward on this it could be done in weeks rather than months, I believe."

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### Owner Of Bail Service Accused Of Fraud

*The News-Star (Monroe, La.)...April 6, 2006*  
by....Staff Writer

Bryan Arthur Johnson, 36, Monroe, owner of E-Z Bail Bonds/Serious Business Investments LLC., 510 Pine St. No. 1, Monroe, and his employee, Frederick Smith, 40, were arrested by Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit investigators Wednesday on 24 counts of insurance fraud. Fraud Unit investigators also served them with an order to cease and desist conducting business.

In a press release issued by the Louisiana Department of Insurance, it alleges that Smith was writing and signing bail bonds and executing powers of attorney for bail on behalf of E-Z Bail Bonds without an insurance license.

Johnson was arrested at Richland Parish Detention Center and booked there. He posted a cash bond of \$5,030.

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### Local Woman Faces Felony Theft Charge

*The Times (Shreveport, La.)....April 26, 2006*

The Louisiana state police Insurance Fraud Unit arrested a Shreveport woman Tuesday for theft in connection with the misappropriation of insurance premium payments.

Betty Sonnier, 53, of the 1100 block of Leander Street, is charged with one count of felony theft. Sonnier was booked into the Bossier Parish Jail where she later posted a \$5,000 bond.

The former clerical employee of a Bossier City insurance agency is accused of pocketing more than \$1,000 in client's insurance premiums during her employment, according to state police.

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### Arrest For Fraud In Obtaining Disaster Unemployment Debit Cards

*US Newswire.....May 4, 2006*

Wayne P. Lawless, 50, of Donaldsonville, La., was arrested on May 3, 2006, and charged in a criminal complaint with mail fraud and false use of Social Security numbers to obtain disaster unemployment debit cards for alleged losses resulting from Hurricane Katrina, United States Attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana David R. Dugas announced today.

The criminal complaint alleges that Lawless, while working in his capacity as an employee of the Louisiana Department of Labor, facilitated numerous fraudulent claims for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits. Based upon information obtained from the applications for these cards, the Social Security numbers on the applications did not match the legitimate names associated with the Social Security numbers.

The subject debit cards were issued by the Louisiana Department of Labor as Disaster Unemployment Assistance to provide financial assistance to individuals whose employment has been lost or interrupted as a result of a major disaster declared by the President of the United States. The Louisiana Department of Labor administers the DUA program for the State of Louisiana, the funding for which comes from federal funds provided by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA). This arrest brings the total number of defendants who have been charged in the Middle District of Louisiana with violations related to Hurricane Katrina relief funds to 50.

In September 2005, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force, designed to deter, investigate and prosecute disaster-related federal

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crimes such as charity fraud, identity theft, procurement fraud and insurance fraud. The Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force, chaired by Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division Alice S. Fisher, includes members from the FBI, the Federal Trade Commission, the Postal Inspector's Office, and the Executive Office for United States Attorneys, among others.

The case is being investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; the Social Security Administration, Office of Inspector General; the U.S. Postal Inspection Service; the FBI; the Louisiana State Police; and the Zachary, La., Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney Ian Hipwell is prosecuting the case.

A complaint is merely an accusation by a law enforcement official, and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty at trial.

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### Shreveport Agent Arrested, Issued Cease and Desist Order

*US State News (Shreveport, La.)...May 14, 2006*

A Shreveport insurance agent has been arrested and issued a cease and desist order and summary suspension of his license for alleged felony theft and misappropriation of insurance premiums, Commissioner of Insurance Jim Donelon announced today.

James Dock Stephens, Jr., 49, was ordered to cease and desist from engaging in the business of insurance, and his insurance license was suspended today by members of the Louisiana Department of Insurance Fraud Unit. The c&d and summary suspension were served in conjunction with an arrest by members of the Louisiana State Police Fraud Unit who booked Stephens into the Caddo Parish Correctional Center in Shreveport.

Today's action comes after an investigation by Stephen's employer found that his account was deficient in funds totaling over \$3,500, which led to his termination in April 2004.

Department of Insurance records show that Stephens held a Life and Health license from February 2004 until today's action. Records list his residence address as 3601 Frederick St., Shreveport, and his mailing address as P.O. Box 3441, Shreveport.

### Insurance Agent Booked

*The News-Star (Monroe, La.)...May 16, 2006*

*by....Staff Writer*

A West Monroe insurance agent was booked Monday on five counts of forgery on charges he falsified information on documents while conducting an insurance business.

Louisiana State Police arrested Gabriel Quinn Ishee, 31, 3007 Lakeshore Drive, West Monroe, and booked him into the Ouachita Correctional Center. At the same time, Department of Insurance Fraud Unit investigators served Ishee with a cease and desist order and summary suspension of his license.

Ishee is accused of issuing written statements to two insurance companies claiming that at least five of his clients wanted to be billed directly for their Medicare supplement policies, which are being paid via authorized bank drafts, in an effort to collect new first-year commissions on those accounts.

He is also accused of issuing the written statements without the clients' knowledge of consent and he is accused of forging the clients' signatures on the documents.

Insurance Department records show Ishee has held a Life and Health license since September 2002.

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### Arrest Former NOPD Officer Accused Of Katrina Insurance Fraud

*The Associated Press....May 23, 2006*

A former New Orleans police officer is accused of cheating her insurance company out of nearly \$23,300 by claiming that Hurricane Katrina's floods filled her car and ruined belongings in it.

Uchenna M. Vincent, 29, of Denver, was booked Monday on charges of insurance fraud and theft by fraud, Louisiana State Police reported Tuesday.

According to the department's insurance fraud unit, Vincent claimed that she had had to leave her 2002 Jaguar at the city's Sixth District police station when she evacuated because of the hurricane, and it was filled to the dashboard.



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The insurance company sent more than \$22,100 to pay off the car loan and nearly \$1,200 to pay for Vincent's alleged belongings and loss of use. However, the car wasn't at the station when the insurance company tried to find it, and the station wasn't nearly as flooded as she claimed, state police said.

The undamaged car was found at her new home in Denver, where she has lived since the storm, state police said.

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### A Fraud Focus: Crackdown Continues In Louisiana

*Claims Magazine...June 2006*

A New Orleans couple was recently arrested on felony insurance fraud warrants by Louisiana's State Police Insurance Fraud Unit.

Russell and Elaine Lane are believed to have intentionally attempted to defraud their insurer by claiming Hurricane Katrina caused damage to their roof. An investigation by police, however, showed that the couple purposely created damage to their roof in order to activate the mold endorsement of their homeowners' insurance policy. The case was helped by the use of satellite imagery to verify the lack of or presence of damage in the days that immediately followed Katrina's landfall. These images were used to compare actual damage seen during inspections completed by insurance adjusters and allowed investigators to determine the difference between damage caused by a storm and man-made damage.

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### 2 Held In Storm Fraud Case

*Times-Picayune (New Orleans, La.)...June 22, 2006*  
by....Staff Reports

A joint effort by Louisiana State Police and State Farm Insurance Co. has led to the arrests of a State Farm employee and a fellow New Orleans resident for felony insurance fraud, the State Police Insurance Fraud Unit said Wednesday.

Officials did not say when the arrests took place.

Troopers believe State Farm employee Terri M. Day and John McManus intentionally submitted fabricated hotel receipts as part of a homeowner's insurance claim for living expenses they incurred when they evacuated for Hurricane Katrina, the fraud unit said in

a news release about the case.

State Farm said the hotel's management confirmed that the receipts, which totaled more than \$8,500, were not legitimate. Besides having their claim denied, Day and McManus have each been charged in Jefferson Parish with one count of insurance fraud.

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### Two BR Men, Donaldsonville Attorney Arrested For Insurance Fraud

*The Associated Press...June 24, 2006*

Two Baton Rouge men and a Donaldsonville attorney face charges of conspiring to defraud an insurance company of \$100,000, state police said Friday.

Investigators believe Glenn Davis, 55, and Jessie Melton, 68, intentionally crashed their vehicles in order to file fraudulently bodily injury and property damage claims, Sgt. Stacey Pearson of the Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit said.

Davis lied about pre-existing injuries, enhanced the damage to his vehicle in order to inflate his claim and falsified repair invoices, Pearson said in a news release.

**"Marvin Gros, an attorney representing Davis, allegedly instructed the men to deny knowing each other and failed to reveal he had represented Melton in several previous lawsuits and was currently employing Melton and representing Melton's son in a separate case."  
...Sgt. Stacey Pearson**

According to investigators, Melton, meanwhile, lied to the insurance company when he claimed his vehicle was damaged in the crash. The damage he claimed was pre-existing, Pearson said.

In addition, the two denied knowing each other when telephone records indicate the two had almost daily contact with each other, she said.

Marvin Gros, an attorney representing Davis, allegedly instructed the men to deny knowing each other and failed to reveal he had represented Melton in several previous lawsuits and was currently employing Melton and representing Melton's son in a separate case,

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Pearson said.

If convicted of insurance fraud, the men face up to five years in jail and \$5,000 fine.

Each was booked into the East Baton Rouge parish jail. Bond information was not immediately available.

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### **Car Trouble: In Katrina's wake, abandoned cars by the acre were a long-term blight. But many thousands were stolen, chopped or crushed**

*Times-Picayune (New Orleans, La.)...August 13, 2006  
by...Greg Thomas, Real Estate Writer*

Tens of thousands of flooded and abandoned cars were stolen in the months after Hurricane Katrina and either sold on the black market or dismantled for scrap, state officials say.

Many of the vehicles were disposed of at renegade car crushing operations in eastern New Orleans where state officials worry they were improperly dismantled.

Peter Ricca, a criminal investigator with the state Department of Environmental Quality, said a major concern is that many early car-crushing operations in eastern New Orleans may have been on unpermitted car storage sites and that the cars' toxic fluids were probably allowed to drain directly into the ground.

Other stolen vehicles were left whole, raising the possibility that they could be reconditioned and resold outside of the state.

"It's going to be a major problem that hasn't even begun to hit us, and it's going to hit us hard," said Jack Torrance, executive director of the Louisiana Recreational and Used Motor Vehicle Commission.

Ron Canaday, a special agent with the National Insurance Crime Bureau's Baton Rouge office, said his group has received reports of flooded New Orleans-area cars showing up in salvage lots and car dealerships in more than 20 states. He rattled off a list of states where the cars have been found, from Texas to North Dakota and Ohio to California.

One of the reasons so many vehicles were stolen is

that it took insurance adjusters weeks to track down all the cars they received Katrina claims on.

In many cases, the vehicles were gone by the time the adjusters arrived. And it wasn't until June that the city of New Orleans signed a \$33 million contract with DRC Inc. of Alabama to collect vehicles left scattered about the area.

Under the current system, the State Police are tagging cars for towing and immediately alerting DRC.

But, "We have to rush to tow vehicles still today," said Mark Stafford, chief operating officer of DRC. "As soon as the State Police slap a sticker on a car to be towed and scraped, we often get there to find the car has been stolen."

Many missing vehicles

The state Department of Environmental Quality estimated in March that 350,000 uninsured and 200,000 insured cars were destroyed in the 33 parishes swamped by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. But those figures fell drastically as state officials got a better handle on the situation, and the figure was ultimately revised down to 100,000.

John Rogers, a scientist with DEQ, said as many as 35,000 of those vehicles are missing.

And Torrance, of the Louisiana Recreational and Used Motor Vehicle Commission, which regulates car crushing operations, said he thinks thousands of cars were stolen by towing and scrap dealers after the storm. It was "a big chunk, in the thousands" Torrance said of the cars illegally taken in the early months after the storm. He said most of the fly-by-night activity took place between September and December before reputable operators were able to crank up in earnest.

Sgt. Jimmy Hicks, of the Transportation and Environmental Safety Section of the Louisiana State Police, said his unit patrols the Almonaster area of eastern New Orleans daily and that investigators have just started working with the New Orleans Police Department to "match auto theft lists with the autos we have tagged (for towing) to see how many tagged are actually stolen in New Orleans."

Sgt. Rickie Guhman, of the Louisiana State Police fraud unit, agrees that the cars are "all over the United States."

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That means thousands of consumers around the nation could become unsuspecting owners of flood-damaged vehicles. It also presents a problem for some of the former owners of the vehicles.

***"Consumers who had only liability insurance on their cars can get assistance from FEMA for flooded cars, but they must have the car to show Federal Emergency Management Agency inspectors. If it was stolen, they're out of luck"***  
***...Sgt. Ricky Guhman***

Consumers who had only liability insurance on their cars can get assistance from FEMA for flooded cars, but they must have the car to show Federal Emergency Management Agency inspectors. If it was stolen, they're out of luck, Guhman said.

Consumers whose vehicles were fully insured and declared a total loss as a result of the storm will still get an insurance payout on their vehicle, but without the cars, the insurance carriers themselves are out any salvage money from the car.  
Illegal operations

In addition to the consumer ramifications, the state Department of Environmental Quality is concerned that areas in eastern New Orleans where many car crushing operations functioned in the wake of the storm could be contaminated with liquids from automobiles not properly disposed of per regulations.

Nancy Jones, who oversees the household hazardous waste collection point in the New Orleans Regional Business Park for the Environmental Protection Agency, said that in October when she arrived there was little activity by car towers and crushers. But in November and December, out-of-town towers were racing to the park to dump vehicles so that they could be crushed, reloaded and hauled to scrap yards out of the area.

The dumping and crushing sites were at both legal auto storage yards and at fresh dumping grounds on land just off some of the 26 miles of road in the business park, Jones said.

Jones said her crews have recovered 4,100 vehicle gasoline tanks since October from sites where crushers were operating. Guhman, the Louisiana State Po-

lice fraud investigator, said a legally operating auto yard would take responsibility for all the liquids in the vehicles and hold the gas tanks on site, not abandon them.

Jones said there is little the EPA can do about the problem, adding it is DEQ's responsibility to enforce federal and state environmental laws.

But Ricca said that when DEQ investigators go out, they rarely find violators. Mike Algero, administrator of DEQ's surveillance division, said that the agency is focusing its attention on eastern New Orleans.

Part of the problem is that even though there are 29 licensed auto crushing operators in the state, these operators can easily and legally move their crushing machines to other sites, such as in the business park, said vehicle commission enforcement officer June Powell.

These crushers can only operate legally on permitted auto storage and dismantling facilities, not side-of-the road crushing operations. But the problem is, only the city knows which locations carry the appropriate permits.

"I can't tell you which is a legal or illegal salvage yard out there," Hicks said.

Terry Davis, a spokesman for Mayor Ray Nagin, said City Attorney Penny Moses-Fields is looking into the city's responsibility on the issue, laws regarding dumping and vehicle disposal, and whether the operators in that part of the city have occupational business licenses.

But New Orleans Police Department spokesman Sgt. Jeffrey Johnson pointed to the city's recent rash of murders and drive-by shootings and said that those crimes took priority over patrolling the park. He also doubted the National Guard would patrol for dumping in addition to protection of properties in devastated and mostly unpopulated areas.

"It's not that we can't assist with this," Johnson said, "but the priority basically falls with DEQ. If something is discovered and we initiate an investigation, we rely on DEQ's expertise" to begin with.

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He added that NOPD's auto theft unit has been making periodic checks and coordinating with the State Police theft unit on the problem.

Mike Centineo, director of the Department of Safety and Permits, said enforcing illegal dumping and the abandonment of cars in eastern New Orleans is a difficult proposition.

He says that if auto yards aren't fenced in and following code, "they're probably unpermitted," though he added that some of the sites were grandfathered in before the salvage yards needed permits and became regulated by DEQ and the city. Safety and Permits has conducted citations sweeps in the past in conjunction with NOPD, but staffing cuts make that nearly impossible now.

He added that there is only one way to stop the problem: "have the sanitation officers and NOPD patrolling the area 24 hours a day."

One crushing operation that is operating legally in the business park is the huge DRC site near the Mississippi River-Gulf-Outlet.

At that facility, cars are parked in neat rows as they're prepared for shipment to crushing facilities. Workers secure the cars for shipment, draining fluids and disposing of them properly. DRC does not crush the vehicles on site, said Stafford, DRC's chief operating officer.

Just more of the same

The car crushing that has taken place in eastern New Orleans since Katrina exacerbates a decades-old problem of dumping within the confines of the New Orleans Business Park. Eugene Green, president of the park, worries that the district is becoming one giant dump.

As the one-year anniversary of Katrina's landfall nears, DEQ and the Army Corps of Engineers have each instigated one enforcement action related to illegal dumping in eastern New Orleans. One is a criminal charge, including conspiracy, levied against two brothers for dumping construction debris and other unknown materials on land they didn't own. The other charge was against a dump operator who expanded into wetlands. The corps has not determined if the second case will be handled as a criminal or adminis-

trative violation, but the operator could face stiff fines either way if he's found guilty.

The dumping problem in the New Orleans Business Park has become so bad that Green says he can no longer market the area bounded by Elaine Street to Interstate 510, and the Mississippi River -Gulf Outlet to Old Gentilly Road, nearly half of one of the nation's largest industrial and business districts.

"Do you think a Nissan (site-selection representative) is going to fly over this area and decide to build next to that?" he asked, pointing to a 15-foot-pile of construction debris, a school bus, overturned vehicles and other debris.

"They're going to Mississippi," Green said.

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### 15 Face Insurance Fraud Accusations

*The Times (Shreveport, La.)...August 16, 2006  
by...Vickie Welborn*

An apparent fraudulent house fire insurance claim submitted in 2001 that raised suspicions of arson was the spark for an investigation that eventually led to the arrests Tuesday of 15 people in an insurance fraud scheme involving staged car crashes.

Louisiana state police Insurance Fraud Unit investigators initiated the investigation after a check of a national database connected the same individual's name to approximately 20 car crashes, Sgt. Gary Bridges said.

"That sends up a red flag that something needs to be looked at," Bridges said.

Before dawn Tuesday, state authorities fanned out across Ringgold, making stops in Coushatta and Bossier City, to round up the suspects named in indictments returned by a federal grand jury. Of the 17 defendants two were still at large Tuesday evening 13 had made initial court appearances by the afternoon.

All are charged with one count each of conspiracy to commit mail fraud and mail fraud. Most of them also are charged with health-care fraud. Each count carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, or both.

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## IFU In The News

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U.S. Magistrate Mark Hornsby released 10 of the 13 on secured bonds of \$25,000 each. All are scheduled for arraignment at 10 a.m. Sept. 11.

"If you are not back here, I can assure you that you will be arrested," Hornsby said.

Carl Theus, 44, Gary Robinson, 46, and Victor Theus, 33, all of Ringgold, were remanded to jail pending a detention hearing at 2 p.m. Thursday.

Marty Driggers, 36, who is incarcerated in the Red River Parish Jail on an unrelated charge, and Robert Stafford, 52, of Ringgold, didn't make their initial appearances.

As Johnny Cunningham, 45, of Ringgold, left the U.S. Courthouse, he was asked if he had been involved in an accident. He responded, "Yes, I hit a deer. All I did was hit a deer."

"The accidents happened, but they were staged. These people arranged the accidents, submitted the claims to the insurance companies and exaggerated claims on their injuries," First Assistant U.S. Attorney William Flanagan said.

The fraudulent claims total about \$130,000. Affected insurance companies include State Farm Insurance Company, Progressive Insurance Company, Allstate Insurance Company and American National Property and Casualty Insurance Company.

"Insurance fraud happens a lot and everyone pays for it, including me and you," Flanagan said.

The accidents spanned from 1998 and were scattered throughout several municipalities and parishes, but mostly were confined to rural areas "where no one was looking," Bridges said.

Insurance fraud rings involving car crashes are commonplace throughout Louisiana, Bridges said. In fact, a similar ring busted in 2004 in Red River Parish also aided in the recent investigation.

Eighteen people, including 16 from Coushatta, were indicted in July 2004 on charges of conspiracy and mail, wire and health-care fraud. Twenty traffic accidents were staged between June 1999 and July 2001

A woman involved in the Coushatta case, but who

was not charged, is involved in one crash in the Ringgold ring, Bridges said. "She was the avenue in."

Many of those arrested Tuesday are related. Carl Theus and Melbaly Roberson, 50, also known as Melbaly Robinson, are brother and sister. Melbaly Roberson is married to Gary Robinson.

Carl Theus' wife, Keetchia Rambo Theus, 45, was arrested, as were Melbaly Roberson and Gary Robinson's son and daughter, Victor Lamond Theus, 33, and Vickie Wright, 31, all of Ringgold. Wright and Lisa Jackson Drew, 32, also of Ringgold, have yet to be arrested.

Carl Sterling Ruffin, 48, and Stephanie Hill Ruffin, 44, both of Ringgold, are husband and wife.

Others arrested from Ringgold include Orma Mae Allums, 52; Robert Lee Adams, 57; Jacqueline Woods, 27, all of Ringgold; Ashley Jennette Baker, 21, of Coushatta, and Shrnatha Trenice Edward, 27, of Bossier City.

This is the second time in just over a month that the spotlight has focused on Ringgold. Last month, federal, state and parish authorities swooped into town to nab a handful of people suspected of operating a methamphetamine ring.

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### Man Booked For Trying To Defraud Insurance Company

*The Associated Press (Baton Rouge, La.)...August 24, 2006*

A 29-year-old man has been arrested for filing a bogus auto insurance claim in an attempt to defraud his insurance company, state police said Wednesday.

Glynn Johnson Jr., formerly of New Orleans, was arrested in Lawrenceville, Ga. and recently extradited back to Louisiana by members of the Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit, Sgt. Stacey Pearson said.

Troopers said Johnson allegedly told his insurer that his Pontiac Grand Prix was burglarized while parked in New Orleans and he filed a claim for over \$4,000 worth of audio and stereo equipment. Through their investigation, however, Pearson said investigators discovered that the receipt Johnson provided as proof of his loss was fabricated and that the majority of the



## IFU In The News

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equipment listed on the receipt was unavailable when the receipt was created.

If convicted, Johnson faces up to five years in jail and a \$5,000 fine.

### State Police Book Lafayette Couple With Insurance Fraud

*The Associated Press (Lafayette, La.)...September 8, 2006*

A Lafayette couple was arrested on charges of felony insurance fraud and theft, state police said Thursday.

Shaundaniquea Senegal and her husband, Chase, are accused of intentionally defrauding their insurer when Mrs. Senegal initiated a claim by reporting the rims and tires were stolen off their sport utility vehicle while it was parked at a residence in Youngsville, according to the Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit.

Shaundaniquea Senegal reported the alleged crime to police and provided Farm Bureau with a receipt for rims and wheels in support of her claim. Farm Bureau paid the claim, which was in excess of \$14,000, investigators said.

However, during an investigation, troopers determined that the theft never occurred as the wheels and rims never existed and the receipt was bogus, officials said.

Shaundaniquea Senegal was arrested Aug. 17, while her husband was picked up Wednesday, the fraud unit reported. Both were booked into the Lafayette Parish Correctional Center.

If convicted, the Senegals face up to five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine.

Mrs. Senegal faces additional charges in St. Landry Parish for another alleged insurance fraud scheme in which she falsified wage loss documents to USAgencies, state police said.

The Insurance Fraud Unit is part of a joint task force consisting of the Department of Insurance, the Louisiana State Police and the Attorney General's Office.

### Police Hoping Thieves Take The Bait

*The Times (Shreveport, La.)...October 20, 2006*

*by...Mike Hasten*

Police in the Capital City and in Shreveport are fishing for car thieves with some expensive bait.

Somewhere on the streets is a "bait" car just waiting for someone to steal it. When that happens, the thieves are filmed by hidden cameras and their voices recorded. When they see a policeman and try to run for it, the engine is disabled and the doors lock.

"If you are a thief, I suggest you find a new line of work," Baton Rouge Police Chief Jeff LeDuff said Thursday after receiving a bait car from the Louisiana Auto Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Authority. "If not, I'll be seeing you soon."

Bait cars look like any other car or tuck on the street but usually are placed in areas where car theft is common, said Charlie Peters, supervisory special agent of the National Insurance Crime Bureau.

"They're fairly new cars, the kind of stuff people steal," he said.

The NICB lends the \$50,000 bait cars to police departments for free and the departments are responsible for monitoring and upkeep of the electronic equipment. Contributions from insurance companies and safety associations pay for the cars.

Shreveport has had a bait car for three weeks "but they've not had any hits," Peters said. "They've put it in a lot of places and thought it would have been stolen by now."

Heavy rains might have dampened theft activities, he said.

As shown by the NCIB statistics, it's not always glamour cars that are stolen. Often, it's whatever is easiest and Peters said many thieves aren't that choosy or smart.

In Minneapolis, the same 1997 Ford pickup bait has been repeatedly stolen over the past seven years.

## IFU In The News

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Lt. Allen Carpenter, director of the Louisiana State Police Auto Theft Unit, said using bait cars stands up in court because there's no entrapment issue. Police park the locked cars on streets or on parking lots like any other vehicle.

The audio and video evidence is irrefutable proof. Videos of thieves often feature them talking about having stolen the cars and being worried about them being bait cars.

**"Using bait cars stands up in court because there's no entrapment issue. Police park the locked cars on streets or on parking lots like any other vehicle."  
...Lt. Allen Carpenter**

"The positive impact of a successful bait car program is more far reaching than you might expect," said Commissioner of Insurance Jim Donelon. "Its obvious intent is to reduce the high incidents of auto theft and the high cost of auto insurance due to payment of theft claims."

Donelon said that since many vehicles are stolen by young people who often escalate to bigger crimes, catching them early "will stop young citizens of state from embarking on a life of crime."

Baton Rouge and Shreveport were chosen to receive the cars because they currently have the highest car theft rates in the state. Until Hurricane Katrina hit, New Orleans by far had the highest car theft rate, ranking 33rd among almost 1,500 cities in the U.S.

In 2005, 14,389 cars were stolen in Louisiana, about 12,750 of those in cities.

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### St. John Man Is Jailed I Insurance Claim Fraud; Police Say He Faked Receipts For Damage

Times-Picayune (New Orleans, La.)...November 29, 2006  
By...Staff Reports

A St. John the Baptist Parish resident hoped that paperwork he submitted for Hurricane Katrina-related damages to his LaPlace home would increase his insurance settlement by more than \$9,000. Instead, Louis F. Ford was booked and jailed on charges of filing a fraudulent homeowner's claim.

The Insurance Fraud Unit of the Louisiana State Police, after receiving a complaint from an insurance company, arrested Ford on Tuesday on the felony charge.

An investigation revealed Ford "altered or created multiple receipts in order to support his fraudulent claim," said Trooper Will Pike, a spokesman for the state police.

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### Albany Woman Booked In Insurance Fraud

The Advocate (Baton Rouge, La.)...December 8, 2006

An Albany woman working as a life insurance agent in Ascension Parish was arrested Wednesday and booked with more than 50 counts of insurance fraud, State Police said Thursday.

Roberta Schaferkotter, 63, of 30412 Stewart Road was booked with 59 counts of insurance fraud, two counts of felony theft and a felony charge of money laundering, State Police Sgt. Rickie Guhman said in a news release.

Troopers said Schaferkotter falsified multiple life insurance policies at Security Plan Life and Fire Insurance by using customers' personal information to get policies without their knowledge, Guhman said.

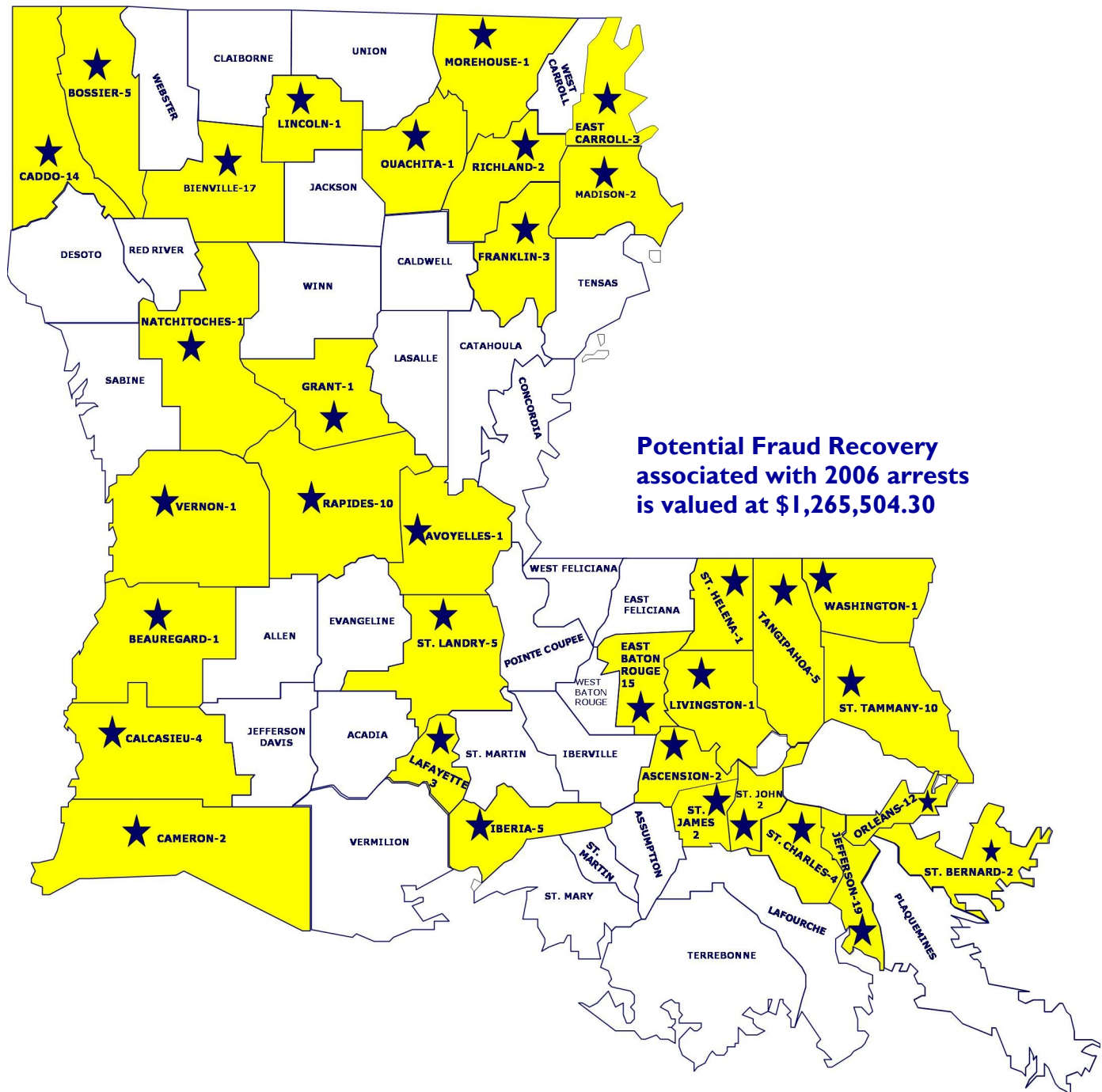
Schaferkotter then reportedly named herself or family members as beneficiary, collected death benefits from the policies she created and diverted money between her personal and business bank accounts, Guhman said.

## Arrest Summaries





## 2006 Insurance Fraud Arrests By Parish



159 Total Arrests

## Arrest Summaries

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**State v. Sharmikie Benton**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**January 9, 2006**

*Charges:*  
*L.R.S. Insurance Fraud*  
*L.R.S. 14:67 Theft*

*Disaster Fraud*

Benton initiated an insurance claim with her insurer, USAgencies, by reporting that her vehicle was stolen from a housing development in New Orleans, Louisiana, after she evacuated the area due to Hurricane Katrina. USAgencies supplied Benton with a rental vehicle as was provided for by her insurance coverage. After receiving a telephone tip, however, Benton was found to still be in possession of the vehicle in Longview, Texas, where she was residing. USAgencies was defrauded of at least \$668.50 due to Benton's fraudulent claim.

**State v. Patricia Morvant**

**Washington Parish**

**January 10, 2006**

*Charges:*  
*L.R.S. 14:67 Felony Theft*  
*L.R.S. 22:1148(D)(2) Withholding Insurance Premiums*

*Disaster Fraud*

A private citizen filed a complaint in October 2005 alleging Morvant, owner and operator of Morvant Insurance Agency, misappropriated insurance payments totaling \$1,950.65. The citizen attempted to file a claim after Hurricane Katrina but was told she was not insured. However, she was able to provide receipts from Morvant indicating she paid insurance premiums on her house and a mobile home. Morvant claimed the payments were lost in the mail. In addition, Morvant issued the citizen a binder certificate with binder numbers which did not belong to that binder.

**State v. William Pinckard**  
**State v. James Rousseau**

**St. Tammany Parish**

**January 10, 2006**

*Charges: (Pinckard)*  
*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud (7 counts)*  
*L.R.S. 14:26 Criminal Conspiracy*  
*L.R.S. 14:67.3 Unauthorized Use of an Access Card*  
*L.R.S. 14:62 Simple Burglary*  
*L.R.S. 14:57 Criminal Damage to Property with Intent to Defraud*

*Disaster Fraud*

*Charges: (Rousseau)*  
*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud (7 counts)*  
*L.R.S. 14:26 Criminal Conspiracy*  
*L.R.S. 14:62 Simple Burglary*

On December 1, 2005, State Farm Insurance Company filed a criminal complaint against Pinckard, a Las Vegas contractor and owner of "Aqua Man" water removal service and Rousseau, a contracted claims adjuster. State Farm alleged Rousseau, a co-worker of Pinckard in Las Vegas, obtained a job with a private adjusting firm which was then contracted by State Farm to assist with Hurricane Katrina claims. Rousseau was assigned to the Slidell area where he began doing adjusting work in St. Tammany Parish. Pinckard followed and the two diverted clean up contracts to Aqua Man.

Seven State Farm policy holders filed complaints in regard to suspicious acts committed by Rousseau and Pinckard. Rousseau, as the claims adjuster, recommended Aqua Man to the policy holder and, after agreement, summoned Pinckard who arrived within minutes. Pinckard then sent in work crews who either did a poor job or did not complete the job. Afterward, he sent exaggerated bills to the policyholders and State Farm. One policyholder reported Pinckard forced entry into their residence and removed belongings and drywall without their consent. Pinckard then sent them an inflated invoice and when they did not pay, he stole monies from their credit card account.

Pinckard and Rousseau were arrested by the North Las Vegas Police Department and extradited back to Louisiana. They admitted their guilt and confessed to the charges.

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## Arrest Summaries

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**State v. Dewaune Cannon**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**January 13, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery*

*L.R.S. 14:133 Filing False Public Records*

*L.R.S. 32:862(G) False Proof of Insurance Compliance*

*Invalid Auto Insurance Card*

In May 2005, Cannon presented a false insurance identification card to the Office of Motor Vehicles in an attempt to have his registration cleared of a notice of violation. Cannon eventually admitted to buying the card from Lajunar Raynell Gauff. Gauff was previously arrested by the LSP IFU in August 2005 for manufacturing fraudulent insurance identification cards.

**State v. Michael A. Bourg**

**Orleans Parish**

**January 17, 2006**

*Charge:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud*

*Property & Casualty Fraud*

Following Hurricane Katrina, Bourg filed a claim with Liberty Mutual for wind damage to the roof of his residence. The investigation revealed the damage was man made and not caused by the wind. Aerial photographs of the structure, taken immediately after Hurricane Katrina, and the lack of water damage to the wood decking and insulation provided evidence the damage had not occurred during the hurricane. Liberty Mutual denied Bourg's claim.

**State v. Richard Bishop, Jr.**

**Rapides Parish**

**January 24, 2006**

*Charge:*

*L.R.S. 32:863A(1) Proof of Compliance/False Declaration*

*Invalid Insurance Card*

On October 1, 2005, Bishop was involved in an automobile crash in which he was deemed at fault. Bishop presented the investigating trooper with an invalid insurance identification card indicating that he had legitimate coverage. It was later learned that Bishop's insurance had been cancelled since July 2005. Bishop was issued a misdemeanor summons/citation for no insurance/false declaration.

**State v. Jay Dantin**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**January 30, 2006**

*Charge:*

*L.R.S. 32:862(G) False Proof of Insurance Compliance*

*Invalid Auto Insurance Letter*

In November 2005, Dantin presented a false proof of insurance letter to the Office of Motor Vehicles in an attempt to have his registration cleared of a notice of violation. Dantin admitted to creating the insurance coverage letter by changing the dates and forging the agent's signature.

**State v. Eric Johnson**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**January 30, 2006**

*Charge:*

*L.R.S. 32:862(G) False Proof of Insurance Compliance*

*Invalid Auto Insurance Card*

In April 2005, Johnson presented a false insurance identification card to the Office of Motor Vehicles in an attempt to have his registration cleared of a notice of violation. Johnson admitted to presenting the fraudulent card and stated he bought the card for \$100 cash.

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## Arrest Summaries

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**State v. Rhonda C. Hicks**

**Bossier Parish**

**February 1, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery*

*L.R.S. 14:133 Filing False Public Records*

*Fraudulent Auto Insurance Card*

In August 2005, Hicks entered the Shreveport Office of Motor Vehicles and presented a fraudulent auto insurance card while applying for a hardship license. Hicks later admitted to creating the card to avoid paying insurance cancellation fees on her driving record.

**State v.  
State v.**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**February 2, 2006  
March 16, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery (10 counts)*

*L.R.S. 14:133 Filing False Public Records (10 counts)*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud (10 counts)*

*Fraudulent Certificate of Insurance*

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 23:1172 Workers Compensation Fraud (38 counts)*

*L.R.S. 23:1172.1 Willful Misrepresentation (7 counts)*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud (7 counts)*

The Office of the State Fire Marshal initiated an investigation after a suspected fraudulent certificate of liability insurance was submitted to their office by Advanced Security Protection, Inc., on December 22, 2005 an employee of ASP, submitted several certificates of liability insurance coverage over a period of four years on behalf of ASP's owner. The purpose was to comply with licensing requirements for securing a business license from the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

The investigation revealed subject altered legitimate insurance documents from 2001 and submitted the altered versions of the same documents annually through 2006 to show proof of insurance coverage through Louisiana Companies Insurance Agency. Although the altered documents showed valid proof of commercial liability and worker's compensation insurance coverage, ASP had not had insurance coverage through Louisiana Companies since July 2001. A total of 38 employees were identified as not having worker's compensation insurance coverage over the four year period.

An additional 53 altered certificates of insurance were discovered when a search warrant was executed at ASP's business location. During the search, subject's son admitted his father did not have commercial liability or worker's compensation insurance coverage on their business since 2001.

**State v. Leodis Norman**

**Franklin Parish**

**February 3, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud (2 counts)*

*Insurance Fraud*

On June 28, 2004, Leodis Norman purchased a 2002 Ford mustang from Northpoint Ford Dealership. The vehicle was purchased with pre-existing damage with the agreement the vehicle would be returned at a later date and repairs would be made at no cost to Mr. Norman. He would also be provided a rental vehicle at no cost to him. On October 7, 2006, Norman filed a claim with State Farm Insurance for these pre-existing damages to his vehicle. He received a check for \$1,049.00. On November 19, 2004, Norman submitted a forged rental invoice for \$463.00 to State Farm. This claim was subsequently denied.

**State v. Jamie Lynn Boutte**

**Lafayette Parish**

**February 6, 2006**

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## Arrest Summaries

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Charge:  
L.R.S. Insurance Fraud

Disaster Fraud

Boutte initiated an insurance claim with her insurer, State Farm Fire & Casualty, by reporting that personal property of hers was damaged by Hurricane Rita at her rental residence. However, Boutte's landlord stated Boutte moved out of the residence completely prior to the storm making landfall. In addition, Boutte was found to have made material misstatements in a recorded interview and provided State Farm with photographs of damaged property which did not even belong to her.

**State v. Vernon Allen**

**Livingston Parish**

**February 9, 2006**

Charges:  
L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery  
L.R.S. 14:133 Filing False Public Records

Fraudulent Auto Insurance Card

In July 2005, Allen presented a fraudulent auto insurance card to the Office of Motor Vehicles in Denham Springs in an attempt to retrieve his license plate. Allen admitted to creating the insurance card on his home computer. He was also booked on outstanding warrants issued by the Livingston Parish Sheriff's Office and the Walker Police Department.

**State v. Howard Clark**  
**State v. Claudette Clark**

**Jefferson Parish**  
**Jefferson Parish**

**February 9, 2006**  
**February 23, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

Disaster Fraud

The Clarks initiated an insurance claim with their insurer, Liberty Mutual, by reporting that their three vehicles were flooded by Hurricane Katrina while parked at their residence in Gretna. The Clarks submitted documents including nine photographs of mud smeared on one of the vehicles. The photographs appeared extremely suspicious and not consistent with actual flooded vehicles i.e. the mud appeared to have been "painted" on by a sponge and the mud looked like red clay. Further investigation revealed all of the Clark's vehicles to be in good condition with no signs of water damage.

**State v. Brandon Dugan**

**Avoyelles**

**February 09, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery

Altered Document

On February 04, 2005, Dugan was involved in a single vehicle crash with his 1999 GMC Yukon. At the time of the crash, U.S. Agencies was Dugan's insurance carrier. An insurance check for \$3,565.30 was issued to Dugan, and it bore his name and the vehicle's lien holder. Dugan altered the check to indicate that he was the sole payee; he also forged the authorizing insurance agent's signature. He later attempted to cash the check at a Lafayette check-cashing establishment. An alert employee contacted U.S. Agencies to verify the check's legitimacy and learned that it was not authentic. After receiving this complaint from the Louisiana Department of Insurance, the Louisiana State Police/Insurance Fraud Unit conducted an investigation that yielded a "Forgery" arrest warrant that was obtained through the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial District of Lafayette Parish. Mr. Dugan was subsequently arrested at the Avoyelles Parish Detention Facility where he was being held on other unrelated charges.

**State v. David P. Bishop**

**Orleans Parish**

**February 14, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

Property & Casualty Fraud

Bishop claimed his residence was looted when he evacuated for Hurricane Katrina. He filed a claim with Liberty Mutual for the loss items. The Proof of Loss list contained several high value items such as a plasma television, a Bose sound system, and two computers. He claimed he paid cash for the items and provided the approximate dates he purchased the items. The manufacturers of the items and the stores he bought the items from were contacted and they had no record he ever purchased such items. Liberty Mutual denied his claim.

**State v. Marvin Batiste**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**February 16, 2006**

## Arrest Summaries

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*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery*

*L.R.S. 14:133 Filing False Public Records*

*L.R.S. 32:862(G) False Proof of Insurance Compliance*

*Fraudulent Auto Insurance Card*

In May 2005, Batiste presented a fraudulent auto insurance card to the Office of Motor Vehicles in Baton Rouge in an attempt to clear a notice of violation. The listed insurance agent, Wright and Percy, confirmed they had no record of Batiste having insurance of any kind with their company. Batiste was arrested on the above charges and was also booked on outstanding burglary, theft, drug and traffic warrants issued by the East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office and the Baton Rouge City Constable's Office.

**State v. Robert Crumm**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**February 22, 2006**

*Charge:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud*

*Property and Casualty Fraud*

On July 8, 2004, Crumm was involved in a traffic crash at approximately 5:25 a.m. The crash was investigated by the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office and Crumm was issued citations for Reckless Operation and No Insurance. At approximately 7:17 a.m., Crumm contacted GEICO via telephone and purchased an insurance policy. Crumm then attempted to make a claim against that policy to have his vehicle repaired from the earlier crash.

**State v. Larry Debetaz**

**Tangipahoa Parish**

**February 24, 2006**

*Charge:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud*

*Disaster Fraud*

Debetaz's rental residence in Slidell sustained severe flooding due to Hurricane Katrina. Debetaz filed a property damage claim; however, the claim was denied because he did not have flood insurance. Debetaz then immediately filed a theft claim. The contents list for his theft claim was identical to his flood claim contents list, both totaling \$28,010.00. Several of the items Debetaz claimed were damaged, then stolen, were located when a search warrant was executed on Debetaz's mini-storage unit in Denham Springs.

**State v. Patrick Baker**

**St. Tammany Parish**

**March 8, 2006**

*Charge:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud*

*Disaster Fraud*

On August 30, 2005, Baker contacted his insurer, GEICO, to report his Ford F-250 had been flooded during Hurricane Katrina. GEICO was going to consider the vehicle a total loss and pay Baker \$39,044.90; however, the adjuster found no evidence the vehicle suffered any water damage. Baker attempted to further his claim by stating he had the vehicle professionally detailed but withdrew his claim within 30 minutes of the adjuster's inspection stating he would just fix the vehicle himself.

**State v. Russell Lane**

**Orleans Parish**

**March 8, 2006**

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## Arrest Summaries

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### State v. Elaine Lane

Charge: (R. Lane)  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

Disaster Fraud

Charge: (E. Lane)  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

The Lane's residence in New Orleans sustained damage due to Hurricane Katrina and they initiated a claim with their insurer, Liberty Mutual, with whom they had homeowner's and flood insurance. The Lanes expressed concern during the claims process whether or not their mold endorsement would cover several personal items in their attic. Liberty Mutual advised the items in the attic would not be covered since, at the time of the initial inspection, the attic and roof were not disturbed. Satellite photographs of the Lane's house taken three days after Hurricane Katrina clearly show no damage to the Lane's roof.

A secondary inspection, however, revealed suspicious holes in the roof. There were several cuts in the shingles and in the thick black roofing felt which appeared to be consistent with a knife cut. Also present were fresh gouge marks in the wood along the area where the shingles and the roofing matt was removed. It appears a metal tool cut into the wood as the shingles were being removed which is extremely inconsistent with the hundreds of other wind damaged roofs inspected since Hurricane Katrina.

Missing shingles would allow water to enter through the roof and into the attic thereby creating mold. Having mold in the attic due to wind driven rain would activate their mold endorsement and the Lanes would be able to claim damage to personal items located in the attic. It is believed the Lanes created damage to their roof in order to make it appear the damages were caused by Hurricane Katrina and activate their homeowner's insurance mold endorsement.

### State v. Thomas C. Mahoney

Lafayette

March 17, 2006

Charges:  
L.R.S. 22:1148(D) Unfair Trade Practices  
L.R.S. 14:67 Theft

Producer Fraud

On February 19, 2003, the Louisiana Department of Insurance referred a complaint, regarding Mahoney, to the State Police/ Insurance Fraud Unit. Reportedly, Mahoney was selling bogus liability and accident death insurance policies to owners and pilots of Ultra-Light aircrafts. Mahoney operated his illicit business under the names of Louisiana Insurance Consultants and Mahoney Insurance Agency that did underwriting for Corporacion El Antifaz, S.A. (meaning mask corporation) out of Costa Rica. Because of this fraud, a Florida family was atrociously victimized by Mahoney's denial of a \$50,000.00 accidental death claim that was filed after their son was killed in a plane crash in April 2003. Mahoney not only robbed the pilot's beneficiaries of monies they were entitled to, but he also robbed several consumers, including the Acadia Parish Sheriff's Department, of hundreds in premium dollars. Arrest warrants were obtained in the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial District of Lafayette Parish charging Mahoney with Unfair Trade Practices and Felony Theft. He was located in Tampa, Florida, where he arrested by the Pinellas County Sheriff's Department and later extradited to Louisiana for prosecution.

### State v. Cuthbert J. Brown Jr.

Orleans Parish

March 28, 2006

Charges:  
L.R.S. 37:213 Engaging in the Unauthorized  
Practice of Law (5 counts)

Attorney Misconduct

The Insurance Fraud Unit received a complaint from the Office of the Disciplinary Counsel (ODC) alleging Brown practiced law after his license had been suspended by the Louisiana Supreme Court. The investigation found during the period he was suspended he represented clients on five separate occasions in the Orleans Parish court system.

### State v. James Johnson

Tangipahoa Parish

April 3, 2006



## Arrest Summaries

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Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

Disaster Fraud

On September 5, 2005, Johnson contacted his insurer, State Farm, to report damage to his home due to Hurricane Katrina. Johnson claimed wind damage to his shed, food loss, water heater damage, a/c unit damage and leaks inside his house. He presented State Farm with an invoice from Action Plumbing and Heating, Inc., for a new water heater. The invoice contained numerous suspicious "write-overs." Once confronted, Johnson admitted to altering the invoice to reflect a higher amount than he was entitled to.

**State v. Frederick Smith**  
**State v. Bryan Johnson**

**Richland Parish**

**April 5, 2006**

Charges:  
L.R.S. 22:1148 Insurance Fraud - 24 counts each

Unfair Trade Practice

On June 1, 2004, the Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit received a criminal referral from the Department of Insurance in reference to an employee, Frederick Smith, of EZ Bail Bonds writing bonds without a license. The investigation revealed Frederick Smith had negotiated 24 bonds at the Richland Parish Detention Center to affect the release of inmates. Bryan Johnson, EZ Bail Bonds owner, was also in violation of LRS 22:1148 by allowing Smith to act as an Insurance Producer.

**State v. Gwana White**

**Orleans Parish**

**April 6, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

Disaster Fraud

White told her insurer, State Farm, that she left her 2001 Mercedes Benz ML430 at a relative's residence in New Orleans East when she was forced to evacuate for Hurricane Katrina. White claimed she returned to the area a few weeks later to retrieve the vehicle and drove it to Atlanta. She stated the vehicle sustained approximately one foot of flooding which damaged the carpeting. Satellite imagery showed White's vehicle was not where she stated she left it and a check of the water level at the residence revealed flooding of over four feet. Flooding of that magnitude would have completely submerged White's vehicle making it undrivable. Furthermore, the vehicle was inspected at a Mercedes dealership in Atlanta where no signs of flooding or water damage were discovered.

**State v. Richard D. Hapner**

**Jefferson Parish**

**April 7, 2006**

Charges:  
L.R.S. 22:1244 Insurance Fraud (2 counts)  
L.R.S. 14:67 Theft

Auto Insurance Fraud

The Insurance Fraud Unit received a complaint from the State Farm Insurance Company regarding two automobile claims filed by Hapner. He filed separate claims stating his vehicles sustained flood damage as a result of Hurricane Katrina. The investigation found the vehicles had not sustained water damage and he made numerous misrepresentations during both claims. Based on his fraudulent claim State Farm paid \$6,667.85 on the claim.

**State v. Carey B. Watis**

**St. James Parish**

**April 10, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 14:67 Theft

Vehicle Theft

A concerned citizen contacted the Insurance Fraud Unit regarding Hurricane Katrina flooded vehicles from Orleans Parish being taken to St. James Parish without the owners' consent. The investigation discovered Watis was taking vehicles from primarily the 9th Ward area of Orleans Parish and storing them on his property in St. James Parish. Watis then sold the vehicles for salvage to Charles Jacob, owner of Jakes Auto Crushers. At no point were the owners of the vehicles notified or any type of paperwork obtained on the vehicles.

**State v. Everett Alleman, Jr.**

**St. Charles Parish**

**April 13, 2006**

## Arrest Summaries

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Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

Disaster Fraud

Alleman evacuated his Destrehan home with his parents prior to Hurricane Katrina. One of the vehicles they used to evacuate sustained a flat tire and they left it in a parking lot on Airline Highway. Alleman returned home after the hurricane and found the vehicle had been burglarized. He subsequently filed an insurance claim with his insurer, The Hartford Insurance Company. Alleman claimed numerous items of electronic equipment, a flat screen TV and several rifles were stolen from the vehicle and he submitted receipts for the allegedly stolen equipment. However, the investigation revealed that Alleman forged \$6,389.75 worth of receipts from A-I Appliance.

**State v. Glen Adams**

**Rapides Parish**

**April 14, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

Property Claims Fraud

Following Hurricane Rita, Adams filed a claim with his insurer stating his residential roof was damaged subsequent the storm. After having received written estimates of \$960 to replace damaged shingles and \$300 to replace damaged siding and fascia board, Adams altered the estimates by adding \$1,000 to each.

**State v. Betty Sonnier**

**Bossier Parish**

**April 25, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 14:67 Felony Theft

Producer Fraud

American National Insurance Company filed a complaint in March 2006, alleging Sonnier, as an employee in a Bossier City insurance agency, misappropriated three customer's insurance payments, totaling \$1,086. On two of the three occasions, Sonnier forwarded the customer's payments late and drafted against her personal bank account. In both situations, her personal check was returned for non-sufficient funds. During an interview, Sonnier admitted to the theft.

**State v. Charles R. Jones, Jr.**

**Rapides Parish**

**May 1, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 32:863 Proof of Compliance

Invalid Auto Insurance Card

In April 2006, after his involvement in a traffic crash, Jones provided the investigating officer with an invalid auto insurance identification card. An investigation showed Jones' insurance coverage was cancelled for non-payment six days prior to the traffic crash.

**State v. Steven L. Cylka**

**Jefferson Parish**

**May 1, 2006**

Charges:  
L.R.S. 14:67 Theft  
L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery

Theft by Fraud

The Insurance Fraud Unit received a complaint from Raymond Milligan. Milligan alleged Cylka posed as an independent insurance adjuster and conned him out of \$2,100. Milligan's residence was damaged by Hurricane Katrina and Cylka convinced Milligan he could help him settle his insurance claim with State Farm. Cylka informed Milligan the claim was settled so Milligan issued a check to Cylka for his services. The investigation found Cylka was not an insurance adjuster and was not associated with State Farm.

**State v. Yusef Chew**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**May 4, 2006**

## Arrest Summaries

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Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

Disaster Fraud

Chew contacted his insurer, Liberty Mutual, on October 21, 2005, claiming Hurricane Katrina damaged his roof and home. Chew submitted two estimates for repairs to the roof, both from unlicensed contractors. One of the contractors claimed not to know Chew but, in reality, was Chew's brother-in-law. The investigation further revealed the damage to Chew's roof was clearly pre-existing and due to years of neglect.

**State v. Linda M. Daggs**

**Bienville Parish**

**May 4, 2006**

Charges:  
L.R.S. 32:64 General Speed Law  
L.R.S. 40:967 Possession of Schedule II CDS  
L.R.S. 40:1033 Possession of Drug Paraphernalia

Narcotics

After being stopped for driving at speeds in excess of 90mph, Daggs responded to a roadside interview with conflicting answers. After giving consent to search her vehicle, Troopers found a small amount of crack cocaine and various items of drug paraphernalia in her possession.

**State v. Ronald Troutman**

**Bossier Parish**

**May 6, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

Invalid Auto Insurance Card

In March 2006, a private citizen, after a traffic crash with Troutman, filed an insurance claim against the company listed as insuring Troutman's vehicle. After learning the insurance information supplied to the police officer during the crash investigation was invalid, the private citizen filed a complaint with the LSP Insurance Fraud Unit. An investigation showed Troutman used his estranged wife's auto insurance card as his own knowing it was not valid for his vehicle.

**State v. Sabrina Bennett**

**Caddo Parish**

**May 8, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery  
L.R.S. 14:133 Filing False Public Records

Fraudulent Auto Insurance Card

In August 2005, Bennett entered the Shreveport Office of Motor Vehicles and presented a fraudulent auto insurance card while attempting to register her vehicle. During an interview, Bennett admitted to purchasing the card for \$109 from an acquaintance several days before presenting it in the OMV. Bennett chose not to identify the acquaintance.

**State v. Demond Parish**

**Orleans Parish**

**May 8, 2006**

Charges:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud  
L.R.S. 14: 67 Theft  
L.R.S. 14:70.4 Access Device Fraud  
L.R.S. 14:133 Filing False Public Documents

Insurance Fraud

The Progressive Insurance Company filed a complaint with the Insurance Fraud Unit alleging Parish had been involved in a multitude of criminal activities. On six separate occasions Parish used stolen credit card information to obtain insurance from Progressive. Parish also convinced two individuals they could pay him and he would obtain the insurance for them. In addition, Parish reported his vehicle was stolen and filed an insurance claim. It was discovered the vehicle had been abandoned and the claim was fraudulent. During an interview Parish confessed to troopers about his actions.

**State v. Daniel A. Molloy**

**Bossier Parish**

**May 10, 2006**

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## Arrest Summaries

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Charge:  
L.R.S. 14:132 First Degree Injuring Public Records

*Invalid Auto Insurance Card*

In February 2006, Molloy was involved in a traffic crash and supplied the investigating officer an invalid auto insurance identification card. An investigation showed Molloy used an insurance card left in the vehicle by the vehicle's previous owner.

**State v. Charles "Chuck" Jacob**

**St. James Parish**

**May 11, 2006**

Charges:  
L.R.S. 14:(26)67 Conspiracy to Commit Theft  
L.R.S. 14:69 Possession of Stolen Property

*Vehicle Theft*

On April 10, 2006, Troopers arrested Carey Watis for illegally obtaining Hurricane Katrina damaged vehicles from Orleans Parish. Upon his arrest he allowed troopers to search his property where he was storing the vehicles. At the time of the search employees of Jakes Auto Crushers were on the property and crushing the vehicles to sell for salvage. The investigation found Watis and Jacob worked together to take the vehicles from Orleans Parish, crush them, and sell them for salvage without the owners' consent or knowledge.

**State v. Gabriel Q. Ishee**

**Ouachita Parish**

**May 15, 2006**

Charges:  
LRS 14:72 Forgery (5 counts)

*Forgery*

Gabriel Ishee violated his license only agreement with United Teachers Associates Insurance Company (UTAIC) when he met with Medicare Supplement policyholders and wrote new policies for them. He then forged the signature of 5 policyholders to stop their bank draft to UTAIC to conceal his scheme from United Teachers Associates Insurance Company.

**State v. Debbye A. Storer**

**Rapides Parish**

**May 17, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Auto Claims Fraud*

In October 2005, Storer submitted a claim to her insurer for compensation stating she was required to use a rental vehicle for twenty-four days while her vehicle was being repaired. An investigation showed Storer contacted Auto World of Alexandria and obtained an invoice for a rental vehicle she never rented. The Auto World employee stated Storer was an acquaintance and had approached him requesting only a receipt for the rental vehicle for her personal records.

**State v. Michael P. Bellau**

**Jefferson Parish**

**May 22, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 14:133 Filing False Public Documents

*Fraudulent Auto Insurance Card*

Bellau was a passenger in his vehicle when it was involved in a traffic crash in Jefferson Parish. The other driver involved in the crash contacted the Insurance Fraud Unit when he learned the insurance information Bellau presented at the crash scene was not accurate. The investigation revealed he presented a fabricated proof of insurance card to the trooper investigating the crash. He allowed the fabricated information to be entered on the police report and the fraudulent card allowed him to avoid any citations regarding the operation of uninsured vehicles.

**State v. Larry R. Robinson**

**Caddo Parish**

**May 22, 2006**

## Arrest Summaries

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### State v. Karen Bailey

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 14:118 Public Bribery (6 counts each)*

*L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery (4 counts Robinson)*

*Fraudulent Auto Insurance Card*

On at least four occasions between March and December 2005, Robinson sold four fraudulent insurance cards to unsuspecting persons. After learning their insurance cards were bogus, the victims identified Robinson as the seller. During the investigation, it was learned Robinson paid Bailey, an Office of Motor Vehicles employee, \$50 for each of his six acquaintances she helped to pass the written portion of their driver's license tests.

### State v. Uchenna Vincent

**Orleans Parish**

**May 23, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud*

*L.R.S. 14:67 Theft*

*Disaster Fraud*

On September 3, 2005, Vincent initiated an insurance claim with her insurer, State Farm, by reporting that she was forced to leave her Jaguar at the 6<sup>th</sup> District NOPD Police Station when she evacuated for Hurricane Katrina. Vincent claimed the vehicle flooded above the dash and could not be started. She stated it was unable to be driven and still located where she left it at 1931 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. State Farm totaled the Jaguar and paid \$22,122.61 to the lien holder. State Farm also paid Vincent \$1,167.39 for loss of use and belongings (police uniforms) she reported were ruined in the Jaguar during the flood. However, State Farm was unable to locate Vincent's Jaguar in New Orleans where she said she left it. It was later recovered at Vincent's new residence in Denver, Colorado. An inspection of the vehicle revealed no signs of water damage.

### US v. L.C. Ford, Jr.

**Caddo Parish**

**May 23, 2006**

*Charges:*

*42 USC 408(a)(7)(B) Social Security Fraud*

*18 USC 152(3) False Declaration, Certification, Verification, and False Statement during Bankruptcy*

*18 USC 1343 Wire Fraud*

*18 USC 1344 Bank Fraud*

*Disability Fraud*

The LSP Insurance Fraud Unit began an investigation of Ford after receiving a complaint he obtained over \$29,000 in credit disability fraud. The investigation showed Ford forged medical provider information and signatures on insurance documents in order to continue receiving credit disability benefits between August 1997, and February 2002. The investigation further showed Ford applied for bankruptcy protection seven times since February 1999. In each case, he used different attorneys for representation and different courts within the Western District. He also provided false statements such as social security numbers, property owned and previous bankruptcy information in order to avoid detection. Seventy-seven false statements were identified. In addition, Ford used his Uncle's identity to obtain a bank loan for a tractor trailer and upon defaulting on it, attempted to include it in one of the bankruptcies. Upon appearing in federal court, Ford entered a guilty plea to one count for each of the aforementioned charges.

### State v. James D. Stephens, Jr.

**Caddo Parish**

**May 24, 2006**

*Charge:*

*L.R.S. 14:67 Theft*

*Producer Fraud*

From June 2003, through April 2004, while employed as a Life & Health agent, James Stephens, Jr. misappropriated \$3,559.36 in customer's insurance premium payments. Upon his termination, Stephens' employer applied his Errors & Omission insurance premium and accrued vacation time to the deficient account and reduced his liability to \$853.87. Stephens admitted to co-mingling the premiums and using some to cover delinquent accounts to prevent their lapsing and thereby maintain a certain level of salary with his employer.

### State v. Zebedee Perdue

**St. Charles Parish**

**May 31, 2006**



## Arrest Summaries

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### State v. Santra Perdue

*Charges:*

L.R.S. 14:67 Theft

L.R.S. 22:1244 Insurance Fraud

*Auto Claims Fraud*

Following Hurricane Katrina, the Perdue's contacted State Farm and filed separate flood damage claims on their BMW 318i and BMW X5. The Perdue's made various misrepresentations to support their claims and inspections of the vehicles revealed they had not sustained flood damage. Based on their fraudulent claims they netted \$8,071.50 from State Farm.

### State v. Vincent Prestigiacomo

**Jefferson Parish**

**June 2, 2006**

*Charge:*

L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Disaster Fraud*

On August 31, 2005, Prestigiacomo initiated an insurance claim with his insurer, State Farm, by reporting Hurricane Katrina caused extensive damage in and around his Metairie home. Prestigiacomo submitted invoices from Parrino's Pool and Spa Maintenance and Paul Sparcello's Tree and Lawn Service and a twenty-one page personal property list to State Farm in support of his claim. Investigation revealed, however, that the invoices Prestigiacomo submitted were fraudulent and the work had never been performed. The invoices totaled \$12,122.35.

### State v. Glenn Davis

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**June 7, 2006**

### State v. Jessie Melton

**June 7, 2006**

### State v. Marvin Gros

**June 23, 2006**

*Charge: (Davis)*

L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Staged Crash*

*Charge: (Melton)*

L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Charge: (Gros)*

L.R.S. Insurance Fraud

State Farm Insurance Company filed a criminal complaint in reference to a suspected staged crash which occurred on September 10, 2004. The investigation revealed a conspiracy in which Melton intentionally struck Davis' vehicle in an attempt to defraud State Farm of \$100,000. Davis also attempted to defraud Safeco Insurance Company of an additional \$300,000. Evidence discovered during the investigation showed Davis' attorney, Marvin Gros, was directly involved in the scheme.

Under instruction from Gros, both Davis and Melton gave depositions during which they denied having any knowledge or contact with one another prior to the crash. Cellular telephone records indicated Davis, Gros and Melton had almost daily contact with one another for nearly two months prior to the crash. Subsequent interviews of both Davis and Melton produced admissions by both parties acknowledging they were acquainted with one another.

Davis admitted to submitting falsified repair invoices to State Farm for damages to his vehicle and he further admitted to enhancing the damage on his vehicle prior to examination by claims adjusters. In addition, Davis claimed under deposition he had no pre-existing injuries or medical conditions prior to his collision with Melton. However, numerous medical records were obtained which indicated the injuries Davis claimed were actually a pre-existing condition Davis had been suffering from for several years. Davis later admitted to his acquaintance with Melton and the fact Gros instructed him and his wife to lie during their depositions.

Melton also made an insurance claim with State Farm alleging his transmission was damaged during his crash with Davis. An examination by insurance experts and statements made by Davis proved Melton's vehicle had a pre-existing transmission problem which was unrelated to the crash.

Upon his arrest, Gros stated he had knowledge of the existing relationship between Davis and Melton and he admitted to

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## Arrest Summaries

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withholding that information at the time of Davis' deposition. He also admitted to being aware of the fact Davis falsified the documents he submitted to the insurance company.

**State v. LeKisha Allen**

**Caddo Parish**

**June 15, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery (3 counts)*

*L.R.S. 14:133 Filing False Public Records (2 counts)*

*Fraudulent Auto Insurance Card*

In August 2005, Allen entered the Shreveport Office of Motor Vehicles and presented a fraudulent auto insurance card while attempting to register her vehicle. After OMV employees declined to accept Allen's fraudulent insurance card as proof of insurance, Allen left the OMV and visited a Bossier City insurance agency. As the agent stepped to the rear of the business to retrieve an insurance quote from a computer, Allen removed a blank cash receipt from the agency's receipt book. Allen then returned to the OMV and presented the forged cash receipt as supporting documentation for her fraudulent insurance card.

**State v. Ruthie Fortner**

**Tangipahoa Parish**

**June 20, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud*

*L.R.S. 14:133 Filing False Public Records*

*Property & Casualty Fraud*

Fortner filed a claim with State Farm for the theft of her John Deere lawnmower. She claimed the lawnmower was stolen from her residence when she evacuated for Hurricane Katrina. The investigation found the statements and documentation supporting her claim were not valid. The claim was denied but had she been successful she would have defrauded State Farm out of \$6,571.

**State v. John T. McManus**

**Jefferson Parish**

**June 21, 2006**

**State v. Terri M. Day**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud*

*Property & Casualty Fraud*

Due to Hurricane Katrina, Terri Day and her father, John McManus, evacuated from New Orleans to a hotel in Natchez, MS. McManus filed a claim with State Farm for the reimbursement of the hotel expenses and provided hotel receipts totaling \$8,153.20 as proof he incurred those expenses. State Farm discovered the hotel receipts had been fabricated and the claim was denied. An investigation revealed McManus and Day worked together to fabricate the receipts and submit them to State Farm.

**State v. Ericka Lewis**

**East Carroll Parish**

**June 22, 2006**

**State v. Derian Carroway**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 14:133 Filing or Maintaining False Public Records*

*False Public Records*

The Louisiana State Police, Bureau of Investigation, Insurance Fraud Unit, received a complaint from USAgencies regarding Ms. Ericka Lewis attempting to commit Insurance Fraud by submitting a claim in reference to her allegedly stolen 2001 Honda CRV bearing VIN: JHLRD18631C029067. The investigation revealed Ms. Lewis and Mr. Derian Carroway signed Title 26247450 indicating Lewis paid Carroway \$500.00 for the Honda CRV rather than \$8000.00 when she made her claim to USAgencies. Lewis then provided the Office of Motor Vehicles with this fraudulent information to have the vehicle titled in her name.

**State v. Felicia M. Demming**

**Caddo Parish**

**July 11, 2006**

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## Arrest Summaries

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*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud*

*Casualty Claims Fraud*

Harleyville Insurance Company alleged Felicia Demming committed insurance fraud in March 2006, when she filed a claim for injuries sustained after use of a faulty commercial product. An investigation revealed Demming falsified medical documents claiming nearly \$5,000 in medical treatment after a foot stool she purchased broke while she stood on it. She purchased the stool from Family Dollar in December 2004.

**State v. Joel Stewart**

**East Carroll Parish**

**July 17, 2006**

*Charge:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud (Felony - 1 Count)*

*Insurance Fraud*

Joel Stewart was part of elaborate scheme with James Rice to defraud Geico Insurance. Stewart stated he was a passenger in Rice 2000 Chevy Van when it was involved in a hit and run crash on January 1, 2006. Investigation revealed the crash did not occur and Stewart participated in the scheme to defraud Geico Insurance Company.

**State v. Robert Stuckey**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**July 20, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 14:71 Issuing Worthless Checks (over \$500)*

*L.R.S. 32:861 Insurance Security Required*

*False Proof of Insurance*

In June 2004 Stuckey financed an insurance policy for his tow truck, Baton Rouge Towing & Recovery LLC, and received a proof of insurance certificate showing valid coverage for one calendar year. He then failed to make his first monthly premium payment which resulted in cancellation of the policy. A driver of his truck was later involved in a traffic crash in Ascension Parish in which he was at fault. Stuckey arrived on the scene and presented the investigating officer with the fraudulent insurance certificate in order to avoid a traffic citation for failing to obtain insurance. Stuckey then entered into a written agreement with the non-fault driver to pay for repairs to the vehicle to avoid filing insurance claims. The vehicle was brought to a Baton Rouge area business as suggested by Stuckey. Upon completion of the repairs, Stuckey issued a check to the business for \$8,780. The check was later returned without process and stamped "account closed."

**State v. Paul Jones**

**East Carroll Parish**

**July 21, 2006**

*Charge:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud*

*Insurance Fraud*

The Louisiana State Police, Bureau of Investigation, Insurance Fraud Unit, received a complaint from Imperial Fire and Casualty Insurance Company regarding Mr. Paul Jones Jr. filing a fraudulent claim on February 1, 2006 for an alleged hit & run auto crash involving his 2000 Chevy Van. Investigation revealed this van was involved in a prior crash on October 10, 2005 and never repaired.

**State v. Michael Edwards**

**St. Charles Parish**

**July 25, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud*

*L.R.S. 14:67 Theft*

*Automobile Insurance Fraud*

Following Hurricane Katrina, Edwards filed a claim with State Farm for the flood loss of his 2004 Hummer H2. Based on his claim the vehicle was declared a total loss and State Farm settled the claim for \$52,019.75. The vehicle was never recovered and State Farm requested assistance from NICB in locating the vehicle. It was discovered Edwards was in possession of the vehicle and was using the vehicle in New Jersey where he fled due to the storm. The vehicle was seized and an inspection revealed no evidence or indication the vehicle had sustained flood damage.

**State v. Danaille Raymond**

**Ouachita Parish**

**August 10, 2006**

## Arrest Summaries

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Charge:  
LRS. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

Insurance Fraud

The Louisiana State Police, Bureau of Investigation, Insurance Fraud Unit, received a complaint from Progressive Insurance Company in reference to Danaille Raymond filing a fraudulent claim. Raymond claimed her 1996 Chevy Truck was stolen on May 22, 2005 while she was at E. A. Conway Hospital in Monroe, Louisiana. She also claimed she had a set of rims, valued at \$2,725.00, on her vehicle at the time of theft. Investigation revealed Raymond submitted a fictitious receipt for the rims to Progressive.

US v. Carl D. Theus, et al  
US v. Sharnatha T. Edwards  
US v. Robert L. Adams, Jr.  
US v. Orma M. Allums  
US v. Johnny W. Cunningham  
US v. Gary W. Robinson  
US v. Melbaly Robinson  
US v. Carl S. Ruffin  
US v. H. Ruffin  
US v. Keetchia Rambo Theus  
US v. Victor L. Theus  
US v. Jacqueline B. Woods  
US v. Marty L. Driggers  
US v. Ashley Baker  
US v. Robert E. Stafford  
US v. Lisa Drew  
US v. Vickie S. Wright

Bossier Parish  
Bossier Parish  
Bienville Parish  
Bienville Parish  
Bienville Parish  
Bienville Parish  
Bienville Parish  
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Bienville Parish  
Bienville Parish  
Bienville Parish  
Bienville Parish  
Red River Parish  
Red River Parish  
Orleans Parish  
Bienville Parish  
Caddo Parish

August 15, 2006

August 16, 2006  
September 1, 2006

Charges:  
18 USC 371 Conspiracy (1 count each)  
18 USC 1341 Mail Fraud (39 counts total)  
18 USC 1347 Health Care Fraud (17 total counts)

Staged Crash Ring

During the course of an unrelated investigation of Melbaly Robinson and Victor Theus for the arson of an uninhabited dwelling, it was discovered there was a loose knit organization of people in the Ringgold area involved in staging crashes for the purpose of collecting insurance payments. The investigation showed Carl Theus not only participated, but orchestrated the automobile crashes in the scheme to defraud insurance companies. Theus, the owner of a local bar, used trusted patrons and family members as participants in the schemes. Theus obtained monetary reward from the staged crashes through the sale of illegal narcotics to the participants after they had received their insurance payments.

State v. George Hasney

East Baton Rouge Parish

August 16, 2006

Charges:  
L.R.S. 14:133 Filing or Maintaining False Public Documents (3 counts)

Fabricated Insurance Cards

The State Fire Marshal's Office contacted the Insurance Fraud Unit regarding fabricated proof of liability insurance certificates sent by Hasney. Hasney owned an alarm service and in order to renew and obtain his annual permit from the State Fire Marshal's Office he had to submit proof of liability insurance. It was discovered for the past three he had sent and used fabricated insurance documents to obtain his permit.

State v. Shaundaniquea Senegal

Lafayette

August 17, 2006

## Arrest Summaries

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*Charges:*

LARS 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

LARS 14:59 Criminal Mischief

LARS 14:67 Theft

*Auto Claims Fraud*

In March of 2006, Shaundaniquea Senegal contacted the Youngsville Police Department and made a report of theft indicating that the wheels and tires mounted on her 2003 Expedition had been stolen. Senegal estimated the value of these items at \$14,536.10. Senegal filed a claim with her insurance company and the insurance company paid her for the claim. An investigation showed that there was no theft and that the type of wheels and tires Senegal reported stolen were never on her vehicle.

**State v. Shaundaniquea Senegal**

**St. Landry**

**August 17, 2006**

*Charge:*

LARS 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Auto Claims Fraud*

In June of 2006, Shaundaniquea Senegal was involved in a three vehicle crash near Laplace, Louisiana. As part of her injury claim, Senegal submitted a Statement of Loss Wages with an estimated value of \$600.00 to the at-fault insurance company. The investigation revealed that Senegal was working at her place of employment in Opelousas, Louisiana on the days she claimed to have missed work due to her injuries.

**State v. Carl Theus**

**Bienville Parish**

**August 17, 2006**

*Charge:*

Failure to Register as a Sex Offender

*Unregistered Sexual Offender L.R.S.15:542*

In 1995, Theus was convicted on two separate occasions in California as a child sexual offender. As part of his conviction, the California Court order Theus to register as a sex offender within 10 days of moving to a new city or county. In 1996, Theus moved to Louisiana, but failed to register as a sexual offender.

**State v. Sterling Champagne, Jr.**

**Jefferson Parish**

**August 18, 2006**

*Charge:*

L.R.S. 14 1243 Insurance Fraud

*Automobile Insurance Fraud*

Champagne evacuated his residence prior to Hurricane Katrina. He claimed he left his 1998 Cadillac at his residence where it sustained flood damage. He filed a flood loss claim with State Farm and received a settlement of \$12,918.18. An investigation, which included an inspection of the vehicle, found the vehicle was not flooded and the claim was not legitimate.

**State v. Glynn Johnson, Jr.**

**Orleans Parish**

**August 22, 2006**

*Charge:*

L.R.S. 22:1244 Insurance Fraud

*Automobile Insurance Fraud*

Johnson claimed his vehicle was burglarized and he filed a theft claim for the various electronic and radio equipment. It was discovered the invoices Johnson submitted as proof he purchased the equipment were fabricated. It was also discovered several of the items he claimed to own had not been manufactured at the time he claimed to have purchased the items. The claim was denied by State Farm.

**State v. Sammie Essam**

**Rapides**

**August 23, 2006**

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## Arrest Summaries

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Charge:  
LARS 32:863 Proof of Compliance

*Invalid Auto Insurance Card*

In December of 2005 Sammie Essam was involved in a two vehicle traffic crash in Rapides Parish. During the investigation of the crash by law enforcement, Essam provided the investigating officer with an invalid insurance card. Essam's insurance had been previously cancelled due to non-payment. Essam confessed to submitting the insurance card knowing that the coverage had been cancelled.

**State v. Don R. Washington**

**Orleans Parish**

**August 24, 2006**

Charges:  
L.R.S. 22:1244 Insurance Fraud (3 counts)  
L.R.S. 14:67 Theft (3 counts)

*Automobile Insurance Fraud*

Washington claimed he evacuated from New Orleans as a result of Hurricane Katrina. He claimed he left his Hummer H3, BMW 741I, Ford Crown Victoria, at his residence and all three vehicles flooded. Allstate Insurance settled the claim at a cost of \$130,339.73; however none of the vehicles were recovered. An investigation accounted for all three vehicles and none of the vehicles sustained flood damage. It was revealed Washington was in possession of the BMW until it was seized by a Jefferson Parish Sheriff's deputy as a result of a traffic stop. In addition, prior to the storm he used the Hummer and Ford as collateral to obtain loans from a local pawn shop. He defaulted on the loans and the vehicles had been sold to an automobile dealer. Separate charges involving his use of the BMW were filed in Jefferson Parish.

**State v. Don R. Washington**

**Jefferson Parish**

**August 24, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 14:68.4 Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle

*Other*

Washington contacted Allstate Insurance and filed a claim for the flood loss of three vehicles, one of which was his BMW 741I. The claims were settled and all three vehicles were titled to Allstate; however none of the vehicles were recovered. It was discovered he was in possession and using of the BMW until it was seized by a Jefferson Parish Sheriff's deputy as a result of a traffic stop. Based on these findings the Insurance Fraud Unit concluded he knew the BMW did not belong to him and he intentionally refused to notify Allstate on the whereabouts of the vehicle. Separate charges relating to insurance fraud was filed in Orleans Parish.

**State v. Robert Whittington**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**August 24, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 14:133 Filing False Public Records

*Producer Fraud*

The Louisiana Department of Insurance filed a complaint alleging Whittington submitted an individual insurance producer license application which contained false information pertaining to his background information. Investigation revealed Whittington knowingly concealed two prior felony convictions on his application in an attempt to deceive the LDOL.

**State v. Derxanle Jackson**

**Tangipahoa Parish**

**August 29, 2006**

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## Arrest Summaries

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Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Altered Police Report*

Allstate Insurance Company filed a complaint alleging Jackson submitted an altered police report in an attempt to file a fraudulent bodily injury claim. Investigation revealed Jackson was in a traffic crash in Hammond and the investigating officer reported Jackson was the sole occupant of the vehicle. Jackson obtained a copy of the police report, however, and altered it to reflect that his girlfriend was a passenger in his vehicle. Jackson then presented the altered report to Allstate and claimed both he and the woman were injured. Jackson later admitted to his involvement and provided a written confession.

**State v. Patrice M. Fernandez**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**August 30, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1244 Insurance Fraud

*Automobile Insurance Fraud*

Following Hurricane Katrina Fernandez contacted USAgencies and filed a flood loss claim on her vehicle. She claimed she left the vehicle at her residence on Sere St. when she evacuated from New Orleans to Houston. It was discovered that prior to Hurricane Katrina Fernandez had been involved in a two vehicle crash for which the other driver determined to have caused. As a result, Progressive Insurance had declared Fernandez's vehicle a total loss and settled the claim. The vehicle was titled to Progressive and sent to the salvage yard before Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans. Fernandez's claim was fraudulent and USAgencies denied the claim.

**State v. Ambrielle Rison**

**Caddo Parish**

**September 6, 2006**

Charges:  
L.R.S. 22:1244 Insurance Fraud (3 counts)

*Staged Crashes*

Between September 2003, and January 2005, Rison staged and/or caused at least three automobile crashes in order to collect over \$7,000 from two private insurance companies. She admitted to intentionally causing the crashes and filing the fraudulent insurance claims for the financial gain.

**State v. Chase Senegal**

**Lafayette**

**September 6, 2006**

Charge:  
LRS 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Auto Claims Fraud*

In March of 2006, Shaundaniquea Senegal filed a fraudulent insurance claim with her insurance company. Chase Senegal, Shaundaniquea's husband, made fraudulent statements to insurance adjusters and to LSP investigators in support of the fraudulent claim valued at \$14,536.10.

**State v. James Harrell Jr.**

**Rapides**

**September 12, 2006**

Charges:  
LRS 22:1148D (2) Unfair Trade Practices  
LRS 14:67 Theft

*Producer Fraud*

In March of 2006, James K. Harrell left his employment as a licensed producer for an insurance company operating in the State of Louisiana. Shortly after his departure, the insurance company began receiving calls from Harrell's customers, who complained that they were receiving cancellation notices for non-payment for non-payment of premiums. LSP Auditors conducted an examination of Harrell's account and found it to be deficient in the amount of \$11,558.94.

**State v. Adam J. Chauvin**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**September 13, 2006**

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## Arrest Summaries

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*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud (8 counts)*

*L.R.S. 14:67 Felony Theft (8 counts)*

*L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery (8 counts)*

*Glass Repair Fraud*

The Farm Bureau Insurance Company filed a criminal complaint alleging Adam Chauvin filed fraudulent glass repairs claims. The investigation revealed Chauvin used insurance information from four of his former customers and forged their signatures to file eight fraudulent glass repair claims. Chauvin's fraudulent claims netted him \$7,634.06 from the Farm Bureau Insurance Company.

**State v. Ottoniel Rojas**

**St. Tammany Parish**

**September 14, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud (2 counts)*

*Property & Casualty Fraud*

Rojas's residence sustained damage as a result of Hurricane Katrina and he filed a claim with his insurer, Liberty Mutual. After the claim was settled, Rojas filed a supplemental claim in accordance with the provisions of his policy. Rojas submitted two fabricated invoices as part of the supplemental claim. He altered an invoice for the installation of window and obtained a backdated estimate on a tiki hut he never owned. These fraudulent documents increased his claim by \$12,500.00. Liberty Mutual discovered the fraud before a settlement was reached and denied the claim.

**State v. Rico D. Lee**

**Caddo Parish**

**September 18, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud*

*L.R.S. 14:126 Inconsistent Statements; False Swearing*

*Auto Claims Fraud*

In September 2004, Lee crashed his vehicle into a utility pole while drag racing with an acquaintance. Immediately following the crash, Lee drove his vehicle from the crash site only to return a few minutes later. Once back at the scene and prior to police arrival, Lee allowed another acquaintance to assume the role as a passenger in the vehicle when it crashed. Lee continued the charade during the filing of an insurance claim.

**State v. Sommar Hebert**

**Iberia Parish**

**September 19, 2006**

**State v. Brad James Smith**

**September 27, 2006**

**State v. Christopher Erikson**

**September 27, 2006**

*Charges: (Smith, Erikson and Hebert)*

*L.R.S. 14:59 Criminal Mischief*

*L.R.S. 22:1244 Automobile Insurance Policy Fraud*

*L.R.S. 14:67 Theft*

*Staged Crash*

USAgencies filed a complaint alleging Smith, Erikson and Hebert intentionally staged an automobile crash for the sole purpose of filing bogus bodily injury and property damage claims. They reported they were in a two vehicle crash in a remote location in Iberia Parish and the crash was investigated by the Iberia Parish Sheriff's Office. Troopers learned the trio purposely ran Smith's vehicle and Erikson's vehicle into each other until Smith's vehicle was submerged in a canal. They even went so far as to fake a rescue of Smith and Hebert from the water when another vehicle approached the scene. Smith and Erikson both filed insurance claims and defrauded Smith's insurer of at least \$10,000.00. All three subjects voluntarily surrendered themselves and were jailed on combined bonds of \$350,000.00.

**State v. Tomeka Jenkins**

**Lincoln Parish**

**September 21, 2006**

## Arrest Summaries

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*Charges:*

L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

L.R.S. 14:133 Filing False Public Records

L.R.S. 14:71 Issuing Worthless Checks

*Insurance Fraud*

The Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit received a complaint from USAgencies Insurance Company, in reference to Tomeka K. Jenkins filing a false theft claim. Investigation revealed on February 23, 2004, Tomeka Jenkins purchased a 1992 Lincoln Town Car from Tucker Used Cars for \$4995.00. On December 14, 2005, the vehicle was repossessed by Tucker's Used Cars for lack of payments.

**State v. Norwood Spencer**

**St. Tammany Parish**

**September 22, 2006**

*Charges:*

L.R.S. 22:1244 Insurance Fraud

L.R.S. 14: 67 Felony Theft

*Automobile Insurance Fraud*

Spencer's Ford Mustang flooded as a result of Hurricane Katrina. He filed a claim with Allstate and the vehicle was declared a total loss. Spencer was asked to provide an estimated mileage because the electronic odometer was damaged by the flood waters. Spencer claimed the mileage was 37,000 miles and the low mileage was due to the fact he was a police officer and had a take home vehicle. The value of the vehicle and subsequent settlement was paid based on the mileage. An investigation found that Spencer intentionally under estimated the mileage by more than 30,000 miles and this misrepresentation resulted in an overpayment of \$2,175.00.

**State v. Ronnie Neil Sanders**

**Rapides**

**September 25, 2006**

*Charges:*

L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery (2 Counts)

*Producer Fraud*

In December of 2004, Ronnie Sanders, a licensed producer for an insurance company operating in the State of Louisiana, forged his wife's signature and the signature of a witness in connection with an insurance policy. Sanders did this in order to complete a Change of Beneficiary Form, which named him as the beneficiary on an insurance policy in his wife's name. Sanders also forged his wife's name on a Change of Name Form pertaining to the same policy.

**State v. Timothy Bolyer**

**Natchitoches**

**September 26, 2006**

*Charge:*

L.R.S. 14:133 Filing False Public Records

*Invalid Auto Insurance Card*

In October of 2005, Timothy Bolyer entered the Natchitoches, Louisiana, Office of DMV and provided them with a Fraudulent Insurance Card in order to clear flags on his driving record and obtain a valid CDL license. A DMV employee recognized the card as having been altered and denied Bolyer's request to reinstate his license. Bolyer confessed to altering the card in order to obtain his driver's license.

**State v. McDonough Robinson**

**Ascension Parish**

**October 4, 2006**

*Charge:*

L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Disaster Fraud*

State Farm Fire and Casualty Company and the Louisiana Department of Insurance filed a complaint alleging McDonough Robinson filed a fraudulent insurance claim after Hurricane Katrina. Robinson made a claim on his roof following the storm and it was discovered that he had made the same claim 3 years before on the same roof. State Farm paid Robinson \$5,200.00 to have the roof replaced in 2003. The investigation discovered the roof had never been replaced and the damage that existed in 2005 was the same damage that was visible in 2003. Robinson's claim would have garnered him another \$5,000.00 or more had the truth not been discovered.

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## Arrest Summaries

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**State v. Adrenna Johnson**

**Caddo Parish**

**October 5, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 14:67 Theft

*Producer Fraud*

In May 2006, Hudson-Silver Insurance Agency filed a complaint alleging Johnson, during her employment as a Property & Casualty agent with the agency, diverted customers' insurance premiums to her personal bank account. Between October 2005, and February 2006, Johnson stole \$12,806.38 in customers' premiums while manipulating company databases to have non-payment notices mailed to her address.

**State v. Frank J. Williams**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**October 17, 2006**

Charges:  
L.R.S. 14:69 Illegal Possession of Stolen Things (4 counts)

*Vehicle Theft*

Information was received by the Louisiana State Police Towing and Recovery section that Williams was illegally towing vehicles from Brandywine Condominiums. A search warrant was executed and the following stolen items were recovered: 2003 Chevrolet Malibu, 1991 Geo Prizm, 1994 Case Backhoe, 1997 Airman Compressor, 1999 Honda 450ES ATV, 2000 Bombardier 500 ATV, and a 1994 tandem axle utility trailer. Williams voluntarily surrendered.

**State v. Cassandra Thomas**

**St. Landry**

**October 19, 2006**

Charge:  
LARS 32:863A(1) Proof of Compliance / False Declaration

*Compliance Fraud*

In 2006, Cassandra Thomas entered the Opelousas district office of the Louisiana Department of Motor Vehicles to clear up an insurance flag against her husband's Louisiana driver's license. Thomas presented an altered insurance card on her husband's behalf. The DMV employee recognized the card as a forgery and refused to accept it. The card was seized and turned over to the Insurance Fraud Unit. Thomas admitted to receiving the card from a now deceased relative who had been using her vehicle.

**State v. Daffay Jackson**

**St. Helena Parish**

**October 20, 2006**

Charges:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud  
L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery

*Forged Certificate of Title*

State Farm Insurance Company filed a complaint after Jackson reported her ex-boyfriend stole her vehicle from her residence. She later presented State Farm with a suspicious looking certificate of title to the vehicle. Troopers learned that State Farm agreed to pay Jackson \$11,971.96 for the loss of the vehicle with the contingency that she provides them with the vehicle's certificate of title. Jackson went to the State Farm claims office in Metairie and presented an altered certificate of title. Jackson used a title from another vehicle she owned and pasted the information from the stolen vehicle over the existing vehicle information in order to receive benefits. State Farm paid the full amount of the claim before realizing the certificate of title was altered. Jackson admitted to presenting the forged document and was arrested.

**State v. Edee L. Johnson**

**Vernon Parish**

**October 20, 2006**

Charge:  
LRS 14:67B Felony Theft

*Auto Claims Fraud*

In May of 2006, Edee Johnson filed a suspicious claim with her insurance company alleging that her vehicle was the victim of a Hit and Run crash in a parking lot. Johnson received a two party check for the damages made out to her and the lienholder. In June of 2006, Johnson arranged to have the check cashed without the lienholder's endorsement. Shortly after receiving the check, Johnson abandoned the vehicle without making any repairs. Johnson admitted to cashing the check without the proper endorsement.

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## Arrest Summaries

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**State v. Teresa Nichols**  
**State v. Sherman Nichols**

**Franklin Parish**

**October 20, 2006**  
**October 30, 2006**

*Charges:*

LRS. 22:1244 Insurance Fraud Automobile  
LRS. 14:133 Filing False Public Records

*Insurance Fraud*

The Louisiana State Police, Bureau of Investigation, Insurance Fraud Unit, received a complaint from USAgencies Insurance Company alleging Teresa and Sherman Nichols filed a fraudulent auto claim. On March 10, 2006, the Louisiana State Police investigated a hit and run crash involving Teresa Nichols vehicle. She stated an unknown truck and driver hit her vehicle and fled the scene. Investigation revealed Sherman Nichols was the driver of the alleged hit and run vehicle and crashed into his wife's vehicle during a domestic dispute.

**State v. Elizabeth P. Hott**

**Bossier Parish**

**October 23, 2006**

*Charges:*

L.R.S. 14:72 Forgery  
L.R.S. 14:133 Filing False Public Records

*Workers Compensation Fraud*

Metroplex Alarm and Controls was required to maintain general liability insurance as a condition of licensure as a fire protection company. Hott, a co-owner of the company, failed to maintain sufficient financial resources to renew the insurance coverage. In October 2005, she submitted the company's fire protection license renewal application and a fraudulent Certificate of Liability to the Licensing Section of the State Fire Marshal's Office.

**State v. Brian Chappell**

**St. John Parish**

**October 24, 2006**

*Charges:*

L.R.S. 14:67 Theft  
L.R.S. 14:69 Illegal Possession of Stolen Property

*Vehicle Theft*

During the course of a related vehicle theft investigation, Chappell claimed a heavy duty commercial trailer was stolen from his storage yard. He claimed the trailer had been abandoned at a local business and he towed the trailer at the request of the business owner. In order to support his claim he falsified a receipt for towing services. He used this fraudulent document to obtain towing and storage fees, in the amount of \$2,164.32 from the rightful owner of the trailer.

**State v. Percy Matthews**

**Iberia Parish**

**October 24, 2006**

*Charge:*

L.R.S. 37:219 Solicitation by Attorneys

*Running*

Del-Mar Systems and the Iberia Parish District Attorney's Office filed a complaint alleging several individuals, including Matthews, were illegally acting as "runners" for an attorney in Houston. Though the investigation is ongoing, Troopers learned Matthews solicited numerous employees who had sustained real injuries, or who had claimed bogus injuries, while working for Del-Mar. Matthews then approached the individuals and solicited their representation for the attorney in Houston. Matthews voluntarily surrendered himself, yet declined to give a statement. A warrant for Frank M. Francis, Jr., is outstanding.

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## Arrest Summaries

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**State v. Jude Lantier**

**Lafayette**

**October 25, 2006**

Charge:  
LRS 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Auto Claims Fraud*

In November of 2002, Jude Lantier signed a contract with Ace Transportation to be employed as a "Hot Shot" driver using his 2002 Ford F450 truck. Shortly after, Lantier obtained insurance for his truck and on the application, identified the primary use of his truck as "Farm Use" and indicated that the vehicle would not be used for commercial applications. The insurance carrier, as stated in its policy exclusions, doesn't insure vehicles used in this type of industry. Lantier confessed to the fraud indicating that he had been previously dropped by another insurance company for non-payment and needed to obtain cheap insurance for his truck.

**State v. Jessica Norris**

**Rapides**

**October 25, 2006**

Charge:  
LARS 22:1244 Insurance Fraud Automobile Policies

*Auto Claims Fraud*

In February of 2006, Jessica Norris filed a claim against her insurance policy alleging damage to her vehicle as the result of an automobile crash. The claim was paid. In May of 2006, Norris filed a second claim against her insurance policy alleging damage to her vehicle as the result of a hit and run crash. Investigators determined that the second crash had not occurred and that Norris was attempting to claim the same damage twice. Investigators further learned that Norris was no longer the owner of the vehicle.

**State v. Tracy E. Antley**

**Madison Parish**

**October 31, 2006**

Charges:  
LRS. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud (2 Counts)  
LRS 14:72 Forgery (5 Counts)

*Forgery*

The Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit received a criminal referral from the Louisiana Department of Insurance concerning a complaint they received from State Farm Insurance Company alleging Tracy Antley, an employee, had misappropriated premium funds, forged insured names, and made fraudulent claims. Investigation revealed Antley filed two fraudulent claims and forged five signatures to the back of checks made payable to clients. These checks were then deposited into the State Farm Premium Fund Account to replace funds she had misappropriated for personal use.

**State v. Donald Douglas**  
**State v. Annette Douglas**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**November 9, 2006**

Charges:  
L.R.S. 14:69 Illegal Possession of Stolen Things (\$1,800.00)  
L.R.S. 14:207 Alteration or Removal of Identifying Numbers Prohibited

*Stolen Utility Trailer*

A private citizen filed a complaint alleging his utility trailer was stolen. The trailer was recovered in Prairieville from a man who currently held a title and registration for the trailer. Investigation revealed Donald Douglas took a VIN belonging to a 1981 homemade utility trailer and put it on the stolen utility trailer. Douglas then sold the stolen trailer to the man in Prairieville using the title from the 1981 trailer. Troopers believe Donald Douglas removed the identifying numbers from the stolen trailer using a side grinder; however, a partial VIN was recovered using restoration techniques. Since Donald Douglas did not have a valid driver's license, his wife, Annette Douglas was shown as the "seller" on the title when the stolen trailer was sold.

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## Arrest Summaries

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**State v. Earl Steward Jr.**

**Jefferson Parish**

**November 15, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Automobile Insurance Fraud*

Steward claimed his 2001 Dodge Durango was damaged during a recent theft of the vehicle. He filed a claim with his insurance company, GEICO, for payment on the damages. An investigation revealed the damage was sustained prior to the theft and the claim was fraudulent. The claim was denied by GEICO.

**State v. Hector E. Gomez**

**Bossier Parish**

**November 17, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1244 Insurance Fraud

*Auto Claims Fraud*

In May 2006, Gomez obtained liability insurance on his 2005 Suzuki motorcycle. In early June 2006, he totaled his motorcycle after a one-vehicle crash in Bossier City. On June 13, 2006, he added comprehensive/collision coverage to his policy under the pretense the motorcycle was undamaged. Five days later, Gomez filed an insurance claim after stating he had just totaled his motorcycle. He admitted to committing insurance fraud stating he needed \$5,000 to pay off the motorcycle.

**US v. Corey Maxwell**

**Caddo Parish**

**November 21, 2006**

Charges:  
18 USC 371 Conspiracy  
18 USC 1347 Health Care Fraud

*Staged Crash Ring*

During an investigation of a staged crash ring operating in Ringgold, Louisiana, Maxwell was determined to be a participant. After an interview, Maxwell was enrolled by the LSP as a cooperating individual. Throughout the investigation, Maxwell provided valuable information to investigators. In August 2006, while enrolled as a cooperating individual, Maxwell was arrested by local police and charged with multiple felonies, thereby violating his cooperating individual agreement. Based on the violations, Maxwell pled guilty to a Bill of Information in US District Court.

**State v. Maurice Keith**

**East Carroll Parish**

**November 27, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Insurance Fraud*

Maurice Keith was part of elaborate scheme with numerous co-conspirators who was utilizing a 2000 Chevy Van to make false claims with various insurance agencies. On January 01, 2006, Maurice Keith was allegedly a passenger in the van when it was involved in an alleged hit & run vehicle crash in Tallulah, Louisiana. Investigation revealed the crash did not occur and Keith participated in the scheme to defraud Imperial Fire and Casualty Insurance Company and Geico Insurance Company.

**State v. Binh Van Pham**

**Jefferson Parish**

**November 27, 2006**

Charges:  
L.R.S. 22:1244 Insurance Fraud (4 counts)  
L.R.S. 14:67 Theft

*Automobile Insurance Fraud*

From 2002 to March 2006, Pham filed a total of twenty-two automobile claims and received over \$20,000 from these claims. An investigation found similarities among these claims. Most of the claims were single car crashes or incidents, there was never a police report, and the damage area was always the same. The investigation was able to show the same damage was claimed on his Nissan Maxima in three claims with Allstate and one claim with the Direct General Insurance Company. The claims with Allstate had been denied but he fraudulently received \$2,848.38 from Direct General.

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## Arrest Summaries

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**State v. Louis Ford**

**St. John Parish**

**November 28, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance fraud (10 counts)*

*P&C Fraud*

Ford filed various Hurricane Katrina related claims on the homeowner's policy he had with the Allstate Insurance Company. As part of his claim for Additional Living Expenses, Ford fabricated five hotel receipts and submitted these receipts as proof he stayed at the hotels. He created invoices claiming a power surge related to Hurricane Katrina damaged his refrigerator and air conditioner. He filed a claim for mold damage to his residence. As part of this claim he submitted a letter from a physician who stated the mold was adversely affecting Ford and his children. It was discovered the physician did not exist and Ford did not have children. Ford also claimed that after the storm his boat was vandalized and items were stolen off of it. He submitted altered receipts and estimates from two different boat stores as part of his theft claim. Ford's claim was denied but had he been successful he would have increased his claim by \$9,404.23.

**State v. Laytonia Bell**

**Morehouse Parish**

**November 30, 2006**

*Charge:*

*LRS. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud*

*Insurance Fraud*

The Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit received a complaint from State Farm Insurance Company alleging Laytonia Bell made a fraudulent hail damage claim on her vehicle. The complaint alleged on April 10, 2006, Laytonia L. Bell reported to State Farm Insurance Company her 2000 Chevrolet Cavalier had sustained hail damage on the night of April 7, 2006. However, inspection of Bell's vehicle revealed the damage was not caused by hail. During an interview, Bell confessed to the claim being false and a friend used an object to simulate hail damage.

**US v. Brandon K. Dial**

**Caddo Parish**

**November 30, 2006**

*Charges:*

*18 USC 513 Forgery*

*18 USC 1343 Wire Fraud*

*Producer Fraud*

Between December 2005, and August 2006, while employed as a Claims Adjuster, Dial issued 92 fraudulent claims drafts totaling more than \$61,000, to his mother, Uncle and acquaintance. In an LSP interview, Dial admitted to taking the money to support his drug addiction. Following the interview, Dial resumed his criminal activity by cashing at least 4 fraudulent insurance checks for more than \$2,500. Because of his continued actions, the US District Court issued a warrant for his arrest and detention pending a federal Grand Jury indictment in December 2006.

**State v. Shirley Brown**

**St. Charles Parish**

**December 4, 2006**

*Charge:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud*

*Disaster Fraud*

After receiving a complaint from State Farm Insurance, an investigation revealed Brown called her insurer, State Farm, and reported her 1995 Explorer had received extensive flood damage due to Hurricane Katrina. State Farm processed the claim and paid Ms. Brown \$4,521 for the Explorer. It was later discovered that Ms. Brown retreated New Orleans to Mississippi in the Explorer and the vehicle was never flooded as she initially claimed.

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## Arrest Summaries

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**State v. Roberta Schaferkotter**

**Ascension Parish**

**December 6, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud (59 counts)*

*L.R.S. 14:67 Felony Theft (2 counts)*

*L.R.S. 14:230 Money Laundering*

*Producer Misconduct*

An investigation discovered Roberta Schaferkotter, an ex agent for Security Plan Insurance Company, obtained fifty-nine life insurance policies naming her or one of her family members as the beneficiary of the policy while employed with the company. The policies were obtained by using her clients' personal information, such as their Social Security Numbers, and she would forge their signatures on the policy applications. She would use the commissions and death benefits from these policies to pay the premiums on the bogus policies. She did not have an insurable interest on the policies and she forged the signatures of her family members she named as beneficiaries on the various policies. She received approximately \$31,687.72 from these fraudulent policies.

**State v. Dominick Alexis**

**Jefferson Parish**

**December 6, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 14:68.4 Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle*

*L.R.S. 14:108 Resisting Arrest*

*Vehicle Theft*

A Lojack alert on a 2003 Chevrolet Malibu enabled personnel from the Insurance Fraud Unit to locate the vehicle at a hotel in Kenner, Louisiana. Surveillance on the vehicle resulted in the apprehension of Alexis. Alexis provided a false name to the arresting officers and his true identity was revealed during the booking process. Alexis has an extensive criminal history and was also wanted for illegal possession of narcotics. The Malibu had an estimated value of \$10,050.00.

**State v. Anthony J. Wallace**

**St. Bernard Parish**

**December 8, 2006**

*Charge:*

*L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud*

*P&C Fraud*

Wallace submitted fabricated hotel receipts to the Louisiana Fair Plan as part of his claim for Additional Living Expenses. He was a resident of St. Bernard Parish and his home was damaged by Hurricane Katrina. He claimed that for approximately two and a half months he lived at the Bienville House, a hotel located in downtown New Orleans. He submitted receipts to Louisiana Fair Plan stating he was charged \$6,662.28 for his stay. An investigation discovered he was an employee of the hotel and he was allowed to live there free of charge because he was an employee. The receipts were found to be bogus before a check was issued and the claim was denied.

**State v. Milton Joseph, Jr.**

**Jefferson Parish**

**December 8, 2006**

*Charges:*

*L.R.S. 22:1244 Insurance Fraud*

*L.R.S. 14:67 Felony Theft*

*Auto Claims Fraud*

In a Hurricane Katrina related claim, Joseph filed a flood loss claim on his vehicle with the Unitrin Insurance Company. He claimed he evacuated with a friend and left his 2001 Chevrolet Silverado parked at residence in New Orleans. Unitrin was unable to locate the vehicle and Joseph claimed he did not know what happened to the vehicle after he evacuated. Unitrin settled the claim for \$12,546.56 and of this amount he received \$1,457.65 after the lien holder was paid. An investigation found that Joseph was in possession of the vehicle after the insurance settlement. It was revealed in May 2006 he left the truck at a repair shop in Baytown, TX. The vehicle was recovered and an inspection did not reveal any signs of flood damage.

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## Arrest Summaries

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**State v. Judy Welch**

**Calcasieu Parish**

**December 18, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Disaster Fraud*

After Hurricane Rita, Welch paid her nephew \$1,500 to remove a fallen tree and debris from her yard. Feeling her insurer, State Farm, was not paying her what she felt she deserved, Welch altered her nephew's invoice to read \$10,000 prior to submitting it. State Farm discovered the alteration and denied Welch's claim in full. Welch provided a written confession upon her arrest.

**State v. Larry D. McCorkle**

**St. Tammany Parish**

**December 19, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 14:68.4 Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle

*Vehicle Theft*

In July 2005, McCorkle went to Ford, Lincoln – Mercury of Slidell to purchase a new truck. He agreed to buy a 2005 Ford F-250 and was allowed to take possession of the vehicle while awaiting financing. Before financing was completed Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf coast causing major damage to the dealership. After the storm it was discovered McCorkle had credit problems and could not obtain financing. Furthermore he refused to return the vehicle. The vehicle was entered into the NCIC database and the IFU recovered the vehicle at McCorkle's residence. When it was recovered, the vehicle displayed a plate belonging to another vehicle.

**State v. Billy Williams and  
State v. Ynez Figueroa**

**Grant**

**December 19, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Auto Claims Fraud*

In April of 2006, Billy Williams crashed his truck into a ditch. Williams removed his truck from the ditch and brought it home. Shortly after, Williams' truck burned and was a total loss. Williams made a claim for payment with his insurance company. Ynez Figueroa claimed to have been a passenger and to have sustained injuries in the crash. Williams gave a statement to his insurance company corroborating Figueroa's claim of injuries. Investigators determined that Ynez was not in the vehicle at the time of the crash. State Police also determined that Williams, after the crash, intentionally burned his vehicle to ensure payment from his insurance company.

**State v. Billy Williams and  
State v. Ynez Figueroa**

**Grant**

**December 19, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Auto Claims Fraud*

In July of 2006, Billy Williams' truck windshield was struck by rocks which had fallen from a commercial truck. The damage was limited to the passenger side of the windshield and hood near the windshield. Several days later, Williams flagged down the driver of another commercial truck and told the driver that rocks, which allegedly fell from his truck, had damaged Williams' vehicle. Williams was unable to persuade the driver. As a last resort, Williams contacted his insurance carrier and made a claim, not only for the damage to the passenger's side; but for pre-existing damage, which was on the driver's side.

**State v. Wanda Lee Joubert**

**St. Landry**

**December 20, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Auto Claims Fraud*

Between 2001 and 2006, Wanda Lee Joubert has been in 17 reported crashes. In almost all crashes, Joubert made claims of injuries, both on herself and on behalf of her children. Investigators documented Joubert making material misstatements to the insurance companies concerning the number of wrecks she had previously been involved in and the injuries sustained in those wrecks. Investigators are researching the claims made by Joubert to determine if any were the result of staged or "opportunistic" crashes.

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## Arrest Summaries

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**State v. David Matte**

**Cameron**

**December 20, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S 22:1243 Insurance Fraud  
L.R.S 14:67 Theft

*Property Casualty Fraud*

David Matte had signed a rent-to-own agreement on a residence in Hackberry, Louisiana. Several years later, Matte moved his belongings out of the residence and began renting the residence to a married couple. The utilities and house note remained in Matte's name. Days after Hurricane Rita, Matte returned to Hackberry, Louisiana, and filed a claim against the insurance policy for the house, claiming that his furniture and other personal belonging had been damaged in the home. Matte was paid approximately \$2,500.00, initially, for this claim. Matte also made an assistance claim through FEMA using the same address. The fraud was not detected until the actual occupants of the residence were informed of Matte's claim against the insurance policy.

**State v. Cary Williams**  
**State v. Charlene Williams**

**East Baton Rouge Parish**

**December 21, 2006**

Charges:  
L.R.S. 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Disaster Fraud*

The Louisiana State Police Insurance Fraud Unit received a suspected fraud referral from State Farm Insurance Companies and, according to the complaint, Cary and Charlene Williams reported their apartment was burglarized after Hurricane Katrina. They initiated a claim and submitted invoices of the allegedly stolen merchandise totaling \$40,418.00. During the claim processing, State Farm discovered many inconsistencies and when the Williams were confronted, they withdrew their claim. Troopers verified State Farm's suspicions when they learned that the Williams voluntarily abandoned and allowed their apartment manager to dispose of their possessions. There was no burglary.

**State v. Tracy Ryan and**  
**State v. Ellis Jack Jr.**

**Calcasieu**

**December 27, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Staged Crash Fraud*

In November of 2004, Tracy Ryan and Ellis Jack Jr. contacted an insurance company and submitted a claim, alleging they had been in a two vehicle rear-end collision with an insured and had sustained injuries as a result of the crash. The insurance company contacted the insured, who informed the insurance company that a crash had not occurred. Investigators were able to corroborate the insured's statement. Ryan and Ellis, when approached with the evidence, confessed to staging the crash and making the false injury claim.

**State v. Darren Gaspard**

**Calcasieu**

**December 27, 2006**

Charge:  
L.R.S 22:1243 Insurance Fraud

*Producer Fraud*

In September of 2005, Darren Gaspard was a licensed insurance agent operating GMA Insurance Agency in Lake Charles, Louisiana. After Hurricane Rita passed through the area, several persons, who thought they had purchased insurance policies through Gaspard, DBA: GMA Insurance Agency, began filing claims for payment on property losses and damages incurred during the storm. Several of Gaspard's customers were informed that either the insurance policies never existed or were terminated for non-payment of premiums. Investigators, responding to complaints, found thirty instances where Gaspard either failed to remit premiums to the insurance companies in a timely manner or failed to remit premiums altogether. One of the victims identified had been paying Gaspard premiums for five years; no policy was ever written and none of the premiums ever remitted to the insurance company.

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## Arrest Summaries

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**State v. John C. Welch**

**Bossier Parish**

**December 27, 2006**

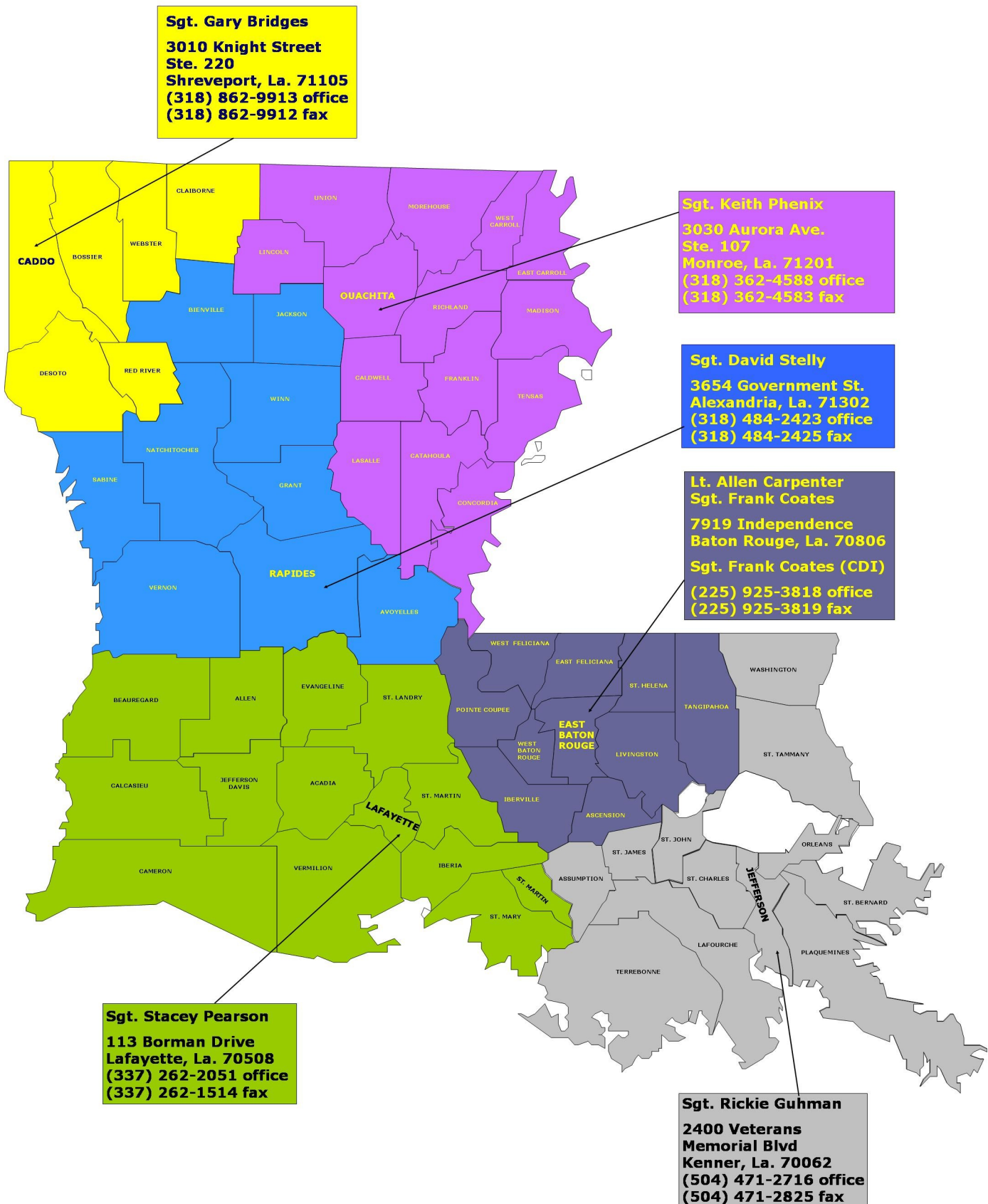
*Charge:*  
*L.R.S. 14:67 Felony Theft*

*Producer Fraud*

Between March 2004, and January 2005, Welch used his employment as an insurance agent to embezzle \$24,685.06 in insurance premiums from 101 agency customers. Welch was employed at a Bossier City insurance agency when he manipulated the agency's computer accounting system allowing him to steal the premium payments undetected. After learning of his pending arrest, Welch fled to the Dallas, Texas area. He was arrested by Dallas authorities in August 2006, but did not waive extradition until December.

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## Insurance Fraud Unit Field Offices







[www.lsp.org/ifu.html](http://www.lsp.org/ifu.html)

225.925.3818

225.925.3819 (fax)

[Insurance.fraud.unit@dps.la.gov](mailto:Insurance.fraud.unit@dps.la.gov)

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